THE
LAUREAT:
OR, THE
Right Side of *COLLEY CIBBER*, Esq;

CONTAINING,

EXPLANATIONS, AMENDMENTS and OBSERVATIONS,

On a BOOK intituled,

An APOLOGY *for the* LIFE, *and* WRITINGS *of Mr.* COLLEY CIBBER.

NOT WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

With some *Anecdotes* of the *Laureat*, which he (*thro' an Excess of Modesty*) omitted.

To which is added,

The HISTORY of the LIFE, MANNERS and WRITINGS of *ÆSOPUS* the *Tragedian*, from a Fragment of a *Greek* Manuscript found in the Library of the *Vatican*; interspers'd with Observations of the Translator.

Tattles unlearn'd Impertinence affords
A barren Superfluity of Words.

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THE

LAUREAT, &c.

TO unravel the Meaning of an Author who is obſcure, unconnected, and wrapt up and conceal'd in the clinquant Tinſel of Metaphor, and unneceſſary Figures; who leads you continually out of the Way, by long, tedious and unneceſſary Digreſſions; is not only groping in the Dark, but it is an unpleaſant and a tedious Labour. Yet ſuch is this Labour I am ſolicited to undergo. I am call'd upon to explain the Meaning, or to expoſe the no Meaning, to take off the Verniſh of the rhetorical Flowers, and to undreſs a certain Book lately publiſh'd, intituled, An APOLOGY FOR THE LIFE OF Mr. COLLEY CIBBER. But upon reading and endeavouring to underſtand this difficult Author, I found, that to go thro' and examine him particularly wou'd be more than an *Herculian* Labour, and that the cleanſing this *Augæan*

Stable, was a Work unequal both to my Inclination and Strength.

And therefore I determined only to give the Publick juſt ſo much of him as might convince them, that this long and labour'd Performance of our moſt celebrated Laureat, is ſomething over-rated; and that if this Work of his were to be diſſected by a good Pen, (they might ſee from this Sketch of a very mean one) it would appear a moſt wretched and imperfect Skeleton, void of almoſt every Thing neceſſary either to delight or inſtruct.

To prove what I ſay, I will in the firſt Place take the Pains to look into and be ſomething particular in the Examination of

The DEDICATION,

Which has for its Title (inſtead of any Name) theſe Words.

To a Certain Gentleman.

Now tho' it muſt be very *uncertain* who this *certain Gentleman* is, let us examine what he ſays of him and to him. He begins then with informing him, " That *he conceals his* " *Name, becauſe he knows he would be leſs con-* " *cern'd to find his Name in a Satyr than before* " *a Dedication of a modern Author.*"

Mr. *Bayes*, a toothleſs Satyr and a fulſom Dedication, are both of them Libels on the Perſons

Perſons whom they deſign to hurt, or praiſe; ſo that in my Opinion you have given the beſt Reaſon imaginable for ſmuggling your Patron's Name; for if you had not your Patron's Licence to talk to him ſo much Nonſenſe behind the Curtain (as there appears in this Dedication) it is a Sort of running your metaphorical Goods; and if you had his leave to ſay what you wou'd in Print of him and to him, provided you gave him no Name, methinks we might with ſome Juſtice charge upon him, (if we could find him out) the Crime of having occaſion'd all this ſilly prittle prattle of yours that follows in his Praiſe.

But it ſeems you are much delighted, " that " by thus concealing his Name you may talk " idly to him without Offence, that he may " not bluſh for having beſtow'd *Favours upon* " *you, and that* you *may give him his* ATTRIBUTES (as you are pleaſed to call them) " of Wiſdom, Good Nature, *&c.* and not be " called a Flatterer by your own or your Patron's Foes.

Here you are quite right, for I don't conceive any Body can be offended at what no Body knows: You affirm very truly, that you *can't be cenſured for flattering this* (Mr. Anonymus) *your Patron*, " *by his or your Enemies; your* " *Enemies, you ſay, are the greater Number, there-* " *fore you reſpect them; your Patron's Enemies,* " (if he has any) are *too well bred to declare* " themſelves.

Now, dear Sir, tho' you may have the Humility to reſpect your Enemies, becauſe they are numerous, prithee inform us how your unknown Patron's Enemies, if they were never ſo *ill bred*, ſhou'd declare themſelves; or is not this an implicit Declaration, that you who only know your Patron, know too, that he has Enemies, but ſuch Enemies as dare not declare themſelves. How then? by what Symptoms do you find 'em out? How do you diſcover, which Way do you dive into their Thoughts?--- And what is all this to the Publick?

But you go on, and tell us, "*That you apprehend no Harm, becauſe you are defenceleſs,* and *therefore ſhut the Door againſt your Enemies.*"

What a Droll! how pleaſant a Companion is this Mr. *Bayes?* He, it ſeems, apprehends no Harm becauſe he is defenceleſs, and ſhuts the Door againſt his Enemies, becauſe nobody wou'd hurt him if it were left open. Oh rare COLLEY! keep the Door ſtill ſhut againſt thy Foes, keep thy ſelf cloſe, neither write nor ſing, and thou wilt ſoon be forgotten and ſafe.

He goes on and declares what every Body will agree to be a juſt Occaſion for Wonder and Aſtoniſhment. He tells us, that "*the Encouragement he had to publiſh this Work aroſe from the ſeveral Hours of Patience his Patron lent him at the reading of it;*" nay, that his Complaiſance went farther, and he *obtained a ſecond* and a *third Hearing from him.* Here we muſt

muſt extend our Credit as far as we can poſſibly, to make us believe a Gentleman could have Patience and Leiſure enough to abide three Lectures of this Apology. Shou'd this be Fact, (if the Character of thy Patron be in anywiſe true) thy Vanity, great as it is, never carry'd thee to ſo criminal an Exceſs. This Gentleman entertain'd thee in the politeſt Manner, and in return you try'd his Patience and murder'd his Time. But he goes yet farther, and ſince the *Brat is born*, he, in the old Stage trite Metaphor, moſt ingeniouſly tells him, " *He dropt the Baſtard at his Door, to exer-* " *ciſe his Charity.*"

And now he declares frankly that the Reaſon why he does not diſcloſe his Patron's Name, is, becauſe all the World knows *Colley Cibber*'s, or in his own very Words, " *out of the Con-* " *ſciouſneſs of what he is.*" This is very modeſtly ſaid, and I honour the Laureat for this ſingle and ſingular Inſtance of his Humility and Integrity. He conceives, it is very plain, that it would be a Diſgrace to *a certain Gentleman*, to appear in publick the Patron of ſo low a Creature as he is.

But then another Reaſon he gives us why he ſhould not have dedicated to him is very particular. He tells him, *that nobody but one of* " *his own Rank, his Equal only can do Juſtice* " *to his Character*; *and if ſuch a* one was to " *dedicate* to him, he might, *without any Dif-* " *fidence*, prefix his Name before it;" and yet

at

at the ſame Time he pleaſantly intimates, that this Equal of his Patron's is no where to be found; ſo that this Nonpareil of a Patron's Name can never be publiſh'd, becauſe there is no Equal to him in Rank or Qualities in the whole World. And what is yet worſe, if it were not ſo, and one could be diſcover'd equal to this Heroe of his; why then, in the Clangor of the general Elogium of Mankind, poor *Colley's Mite of Praiſe* wou'd not be heard at all; or if it was heard (as he ſays juſt before) it wou'd *diſhonour and diſgrace him.*

Yet notwithſtanding all this Rout about his naming or not naming his Patron, I don't conceive this Dedication would have injured him, if *Colley* had been ſo diſcreet not to have blabb'd out his *Intimacy*, *Familiarity*, and *Tete a Tete Converſation* with him.

He now riſes into moſt immoderate, I had almoſt ſaid indecent Raptures, and this *Pigmalion* after he has deify'd, grows actually enamour'd of his Statue: Hear what he ſays; " *When he has a whole Day's Poſſeſſion*, (of this " ſame Patron of his) *He has all his laughing* " *Spirits about him, He is his own idle Self*, " *He is vain, the Pleaſure is too great*, He is " in *an unguarded Tranſport*, &c."

One would really believe that the over-heated Brain of our enamour'd *Dedicator* was recalling, and reveling in the Tranſports of ſome unguarded Hours of his Youth; when Beauty fired him; when he was in the higheſt Bliſs, in the very

very extatick Moment. How cou'd his Ideas break out in more rapturous Words than theſe.-- " *I taſte you, I deſire, I poſſeſs you:* Fye, *Colley*, Fye; have ſome ſmall Regard to Decency; you cou'd go no higher than this if your *Patron* were of the *Feminine Gender*; but you tell us, and him, and you ſay true, that you hate, that you deſpiſe Wiſdom, that you *love* to *laugh*, and to *be gaz'd at*; and you do not care, if you are happy, what your Happineſs coſts: Indeed you are wrong, theſe Ideas of yours very much reſemble thoſe of an abandon'd ſhameleſs *Libertine*; you muſt, believe me, you muſt have ſome Regard in your Pleaſures to what the World may think and ſay, otherwiſe they may judge, deſpiſe, contemn, puniſh and perhaps ruin you: If you have no Shame, take for once, the Advice of a Friend, and learn to conceal the Want of it. You have heard Hypocriſy is ſometimes a neceſſary Vice; don't let your animal Spirits run away with you thus, put on a Mask, don't take Pleaſure in acting ſo indecent a Character, we muſt not do in this World what we pleaſe, leſt it ſhould happen that when we pleaſe ourſelves, we ſhould diſpleaſe every one elſe.

Well now he cools again, and gives us to know in more ſober Language, " *That it is* " *not his Patron's great Power, his great Fi-* " *gure, his great Fortune, and his great Rank* " *(which he hates to be told of)* that firſt ſtruck " him, and made *his plain Heart hang after*

" his

" his Patron. *No, it was his Patron's being ſo* " *agreeable a Companion; for his Vanity is not* " *ſo much gratified, as his Senſe is delighted* " *with his Company.*" This, my cunning Laureat, is a huge Fib. Here thou doſt diſſemble; for all the World knows that thy *plain Heart* did always hang after People of *Figure* and *Rank* and Fortune, notwithſtanding what thou ſay'ſt; theſe were the incidental Ornaments that drew thee after them; this low Obſervance and ſervile Obedience of thine to the Great, has gained thee all the Goods thy laughing Heart enjoys.

But wherefore, *Colley*, do you not in this Place diſſemble? Why, doſt thou thus uncloath thy ſelf, ſtrip thy Mind naked in thy Dotage, and continue to expoſe thy Underſtanding to publick Ridicule? Why, he tells you a little above, and inſiſts upon it, *Wiſdom* can give him nothing equivalent to a Fit of *Laughter*, and therefore rather than not laugh, he will laugh at himſelf.

From what juſt went before, it appears pretty plainly, that all this Profuſion of metaphorical Nonſenſe which our Laureat has beſtow'd on his Patron, was in a great Meaſure occaſion'd by his Patron's indulging him with his Company, and condeſcending to flatter him firſt. Indeed his Familiarity with ſo great, ſo wiſe, and ſo virtuous a Man, ſeems to me to have touch'd his Brain, and made him talk thus wildly and weakly, as we ſhall preſently ſee.

For now, Sir, he ingenuouſly proclaims to all the World, what he ſays all the World knows, *the general Regard that is unanimouſly paid to that uncommon Virtue* of his Patron, *his Patron's Integrity*. Juſt as if he ſhould tell the Publick, There is a Perſon in the World, good People, you may take my Word for it, who is the honeſteſt Man in the World. *Who is he, pray?* Pardon me for that, Gentlemen; I am no Blab, I ſhall not tell you his Name and all that; no, no, 'tis a profound Secret, but he is my particular, my intimate, my boſom Friend, Gentlemen; he loves me, laughs with me, and likes my Writings; " *I love him, I adore him, I poſ-*
" *ſeſs him; this is the Man whom no Prejudice,*
" *no Detraction, no Party nor Envy can touch;*
" He is heard rather as a Witneſs than an
" *Orator by his Opponents.*"

Why really theſe are very fine Touches of a Character, you ſet us agape to hear his Name, and yet we cannot gueſs at him, we cannot imagine who it is that likes your Writings, or entertains himſelf with your laughing Spirits, or laughs with you at his *Tuſculum*; we can't conceive who is this honeſteſt Man, or this wiſeſt, or this richeſt, who is hurt by no Prejudice, injur'd by no Detraction, ſuffers under no Envy or Party; we can ſee no Similitude of him among the State Heroes with whom you ſeem to number him, nor will he, I think, be eaſily found any where elſe.

But you will excuſe me when I tell you, ſome People are apt to fancy, that this is all Poetry, a very pretty Fable of your inventing, and that this Hero of yours is not an *Ens Materiæ*, but owes his Creation to the Richneſs of your overflowing Imagination, becauſe you affirm this *Tully*, of your raiſing, had nothing elſe to do but to entertain you at his *Tuſculum*. Cou'd a Stateſman, ſay they, of this exalted Character find no better Company or Entertainment for his leiſure Hours? Were they ſo cheap to be thrown away thus? No, 'tis very clear, this is the wild Illuſion only of a moſt delightful Viſion; *Colley* ſaw *Colley* in a ſweet Retreat, ſome "*golden Evening in a* "*Theatrical Paradice of water'd Lawns and* "*hanging Groves, walking and prating down the* "*Sun with* Cicero *in ſocial Happineſs.*" In this extatick Receſs, finding himſelf thus honoured admired, beloved, and treated familiarly, by the honeſteſt, the richeſt and the beſt natur'd Creature of the Age, and when he waked, being very loath to part from the delightful Idea, he threw his Dream into this Dedication, and prefix'd it to his *Apology*, for he himſelf confeſſes it looks rather like a *fictitious* than a *real Enjoyment*.

He now begins to draw towards a Concluſion, but before he makes his *Exit*, he aſſures his *certain Gentleman, that he rejoices, both for himſelf and his Patron, to ſee him in ſo particular a Light of Merit*, in *which he and his Patron's*

Patron's Merit have placed him. And congratulates himſelf for being admitted to a Share of that Merit; *nay, to more than an equal Share of it.* So that if a worthy Man keeps Company with a worthleſs Man, the worthleſs Man has a Title to *more than an equal Share* in the worthy Man's Merit. This, it ſeems, in Mr. *Bayes*'s Conception, is the Reflection of the Light of Merit.

But if there ſhould be, and there may be, for ought we know, ſome Gentleman of great Worth and Wealth and Honour and Wiſdom, one who has all the *Attributes* Mr. *Bayes* intends (as well as he is able to expreſs himſelf) to beſtow upon him, who has condeſcended at *Tuſculum*, to trifle away a few looſe Hours in hearing him prate and laugh, how dearly wou'd he pay for indulging himſelf in this low Diverſion, ſhou'd he be found out; for tho' we may, with great Probability, preſume he has forbid the Laureat to expoſe his Name, yet if he ſhould reſemble in any Feature what we can perceive of him from Mr. *Bayes*'s dawbing, it would be unmannerly and a Sort of Satyr upon him to gueſs who he is.

Upon the whole; if he had receiv'd his Patron's Permiſſion to print his Name before this *Apology* of his; yet as he has ſet him up, and beſmear'd and embroider'd and bedizen'd him with his Stage Tinſel and Drapery, no Eye can diſcover what the Ground is; and if we cou'd find him out, by tranſlating his Pany-

gerick into *Engliſh*, the Character wou'd appear ſo high, it might awaken Jealouſy, and raiſe Envy; for all Men claim, and have a Right to claim a Share in Reputation: Nobody is fond of ſeeing it wholly ingroſſed, and People will inquire (as when Men come very ſuddenly into great Eſtates) whether he came by this Character honeſtly, or what Credit we may give to the Perſon who talks thus of him.

Well, he finiſhes this extraordinary and new Piece of Adulation, by deſiring his *certain Gentleman ſtill to hold him in his uſual Favour, and then this will turn out the beſt acted Part he ever* play'd, *ſince he condeſcended to laugh with* (not at) *his moſt obedient*, &c.

——*Nil fuit unquam*
Tam diſpar ſibi—— Hor.

A barren Superfluity of Words.
Garth.

CHAP. I.

Our Apologiſt begins by confeſſing he was ſomebody's Son, and went to School formerly; then ſtops ſhort, ſtarts another Subject, tells pretty Stories; Digreſſion on Digreſſion.

PHiloſophers ſay that Matter is diviſible *ad infinitum*, and thoſe curious Artiſts the Wire-drawers wou'd make us believe that it is poſſible to extend one Ounce of Gold or Silver to almoſt any Length. We have likewiſe among us, many ingenious Mechanicks, a ſort of *Word-drawers* or *Syllable Spinners*, called *Authors*. Thoſe of 'em who are excellent in their Craft, provided they find Readers and Subſcribers enough, make good Profit, and feed plentifully on the Books they produce; and indeed ſo fruitful, ſo luxurious are their Imaginations, they are able to fill the unlearned World with Folio's without being guilty of Learning or Labour, or but with an Ounce of

of each. The Pen of one of theſe Writers glides ſmoothly on, every Thing is right, he is never out of, never in his Way; he can write as long as he lives; the *Lucidus Ordo* never checks him: Of this Number, if I am not very much miſtaken, is the Gentleman, upon whoſe voluminous Work, I have undertaken to remark; and here I beg leave to ask Pardon for any Irregularities or Omiſſions I may be guilty of, ſince it muſt appear to every one who reads our Apologiſt, to be hardly poſſible, at leaſt, extremely difficult to follow him thro' the long perplexed Labyrinth of numerous, vage, and unconnected Pages. A Book without Method or common Senſe is not eaſily to be anſwer'd. *Quæ Res in ſe neque Conſilium, neque Modum habet ullum eam Conſilio regere non potes.* However, I will take the Liberty to obſerve, where I cannot anſwer him, for want of Eyes in the Dark, and attend him at a Diſtance, thro' the 488 Pages of his *Octavo Edition.*

This Book, we find, is addreſs'd to ſomebody, by theſe Words, *You know, Sir*, in the firſt Line, but we have little more of or to him afterwards, only *that he told him, one Time or other he ſhould write his own Life, and be laugh'd at*; the Prophecy is fulfill'd; *yet he expoſes his Follies*, he ſays, *not to pleaſe his Readers but himſelf, and he is content to be a Fool becauſe he cannot be wiſe.* This is really, at ſetting out, a ſeeming very ſober, wiſe, wild, ſilly, ſelf-denying Declaration. But, Sir, ſuppoſe it ſhould

be

be prov'd, that you are not ſo great a Fool as you are pleas'd to ſay you are, and that you tie up your Wit, as a Beggar does his Limbs, to excite our Compaſſion and our Charity, and to be forgiven your Errors by this pretended Confeſſion of them. This we ſhall find to be the Caſe as we go on in many Places. But here he immediately runs riot, and cries out aloud *he is glad he is a Fool*, he *is ſure* he is with the *Majority*, *defendit Numerus*; and in this Manner he is extremely pleaſant, till after following him about a Page and a half, he gives us what he wou'd have us believe to be the true Reaſon of his writing this Hiſtory, *viz. That becauſe as a Player he never appear'd in his own Shape for forty Years on the Stage, he thought the World wou'd be pleas'd to ſee him in his own Shape off the Stage.* Now, I think, the World would not have been inflamed with any violent Curioſity to have ſeen him abroad, nor did they much deſire it. I think too that the Motives which have prompted him thus to ſtrip himſelf and dance naked before the People, were the ſame that incited him to act upon the Stage, *Intereſt* and *Vanity*. I muſt go farther yet, and ſay, that in my Opinion his very Nakedneſs is a Diſguiſe, and that *Colley Cibber* is not the Character he pretends to be in this Book, but a mere *Charletan*, a *Perſona Dramatis*, a *Mountebank*, a Counterfeit *Colley*, as will appear plainly hereafter.

He gives us yet another Reaſon for drawing himſelf at full Length by his own Pencil, leſt it ſhould (when he was not) be attempted by ſome haſty Hand, as had happen'd to Mrs. *Oldfield*, *Wilks* and *Booth*, who were *flatly white-waſh'd* by ſome bad Dawbers when they were no more, therefore he draws as true a Picture of himſelf *as his natural Vanity will permit him.* This certainly has its Foundation in Truth; for that Man muſt have ſome ſmall Daſh of Vanity in his Conſtitution, who can compare *Colley Cibber* in many Places, where *Colley* is very fond of *Colley*, to *Socrates*, *Ageſilaus*, the Emperor *Adrian*, *Horace*, *Harry* the fourth of *France*, *Lewis* the fourteenth, *Charles* the IId, K. *James*, the Prince of *Orange*, *Montaign* and Sir *William Temple*. And now, honour'd Laureat, ſince we have receiv'd this exalted Idea of you, let me beg leave to addreſs my ſelf perſonally to your Highneſs, and as I have not obſerved in this moſt illuſtrious Groupe of Heroes, Princes, Wits, *&c.* that you have appear'd any where in your own Mind like *Alexander*, I will take the Liberty to compare you to his Greatneſs: You have heard he forbad any one to draw his Likeneſs but *Apelles*, and yet permitted every Body to flatter him in Writing; and had he the ſame Capacity, he might have been probably, like you and *Cæſar*, his own Commentator. But you, Sir, with as much Intrepidity, and not leſs Vanity and Courage than young *Ammon*, ſhew us not only the fair but the foul Likeneſs, ſo that in

ſome

ſome Strokes it is a perfect *Caracatura* of yourſelf, by yourſelf; but it is not a *Caracatura*, it is the *Chiaro Obſcuro* of your Mind.

Sometime after this you aſſure us, you digreſs on purpoſe to make your Hiſtory of a lighter Digeſtion to your Reader. Some People imagine that this continually ſtraggling out the Way might make a Book tedious and heavy; every Stomach cannot bear Wind and Froth.

In the firſt Place you are like *Lewis* the fourteenth, for as *his Cabinet contains Medals of him from his Infancy to his old Age*, ſo you preſent us with the *Theatrical Hiſtory of your ſelf on the Stage from your firſt Appearance there to your* laſt Exit (leave out *laſt.)*

You ſay, you had a Father and a Mother; and this you ſay, leſt, like Prince *Prettyman* in the *Rehearſal*, you ſhou'd be thought to be nobody's Son at all. *Your Father was a Statuary*, very like; your Mother a Gentlewoman;---- granted----you were ten Years old in 1682; from hence we compute that you became your own *Biographer* when you were over your grand Climacterick: *A good and a bad Excuſe for many Things contained in this your Hiſtory*. That you went to School formerly at *Grantham*, and that you was the beſt and the worſt Boy there: This, Sir, you, better than any one, know to be the whole neceſſary Buſineſs of the firſt Chapter----But now for a Song and a Dance. Enter a moſt ingenious Digreſſion on Raillery in Company, fill'd with common Place and

hackney'd Obſervations, all impertinent, and only introduced to tell two Stories of two Gentlemen, L---d *C---d* and Mr. *E---e* both Characters in Life, neither wanting nor deſiring your Incenſe. You now very ſmartly obſerve and diſcover, that thoſe *Convivia* or Meals of Converſation where *Wit* preſides, are very fine Things, and are extremely apt, as *Shakeſpear* ſays, to *ſet the Table in a Roar*; and that you for your Part are the merrieſt Fellow alive.---*You do not think it worth while to bake your Blood with Contemplation.*---No, ſay you---*Servetur ad Imum; I was born laughing, and I merrily hope my laſt Breath will expire in a Laugh.*

But this Digreſſion is immediately broke in upon by a grave one, on the Folly of Ambition; where among other quaint Conceits, you declare you can no more ſtrip yourſelf of your Follies than your Skin; and here you appear to be like *Socrates*, *Ageſilaus*, and the Emperor *Adrian*. You are mightily pleaſed with reading Mr. *Pope*'s Verſes, tho' you find yourſelf there ſometimes, as *Shakeſpear* has it, ſomewhat diſpraiſingly ſpoken of. You inform us of ſome Things which you think very wrong in great Princes, particularly in unjuſtly extending their Dominions, ſince in your Opinion that cannot add a *Cubit to their Happineſs*, (their Stature you mean.) And ſo perfectly agreeing with the Sentiments of all our great moral Writers, you find your Brain extremely over-heated by this ſerious Digreſſion, and after telling us again, that you think you was born a

Laugher,

Laugher, and that laughing is in your Conſtitution, you cannot help it, you beg Pardon for your Impertinence, you go off the Stage, and thus conclude the firſt Scene or Chapter.

CHAP. II.

School-Boy Stories. The Apologiſt commences Politician. Confeſſes his Sins. Weeps for King Charles. *Writes againſt himſelf, and gives the Criticks leave to dine.*

THO' our good Friend Maſter *Apologiſt* play'd Truant thro' almoſt the whole of his laſt Chapter, by Way of Digreſſion, you will find in this, he is return'd to School.---He is in a Rapture that he, now as a Writer, can talk to himſelf and not be interrupted, *&c.* And now he gives us his firſt *Anecdote*, viz. That King *Charles* the IId died in 1684-5; and what is more, that he cry'd for him; and that (before this I ſuppoſe) he was carry'd by his Father to the Chapel at *Whitehall*, where he ſaw the King and the Duke of *York*; that he made an Oration on his Death, and wrote an *Ode* on the Coronation of King *James*. He expects the Word *Ode* ſhould make us laugh; he is right; but this is wonderful as well as ridiculous, we find Mr. *Bayes* was almoſt born an *Ode-maker*, and deſtin'd to flatter Princes from his Cradle to his Grave; and perhaps this

original State *Ode* of his, cou'd we ſee it, would excell any Thing in that Likeneſs which he has given us ſince.

But this Oration and this Ode, however good they might be, got him the Envy and Ill-will of his School-fellows, who cou'd not bear his ſuperior Merit; and this he ſays has been his Caſe thro' all his Life.—Stop a little—Thy Readers (do thy Duty here, and) bluſh for thee.--If thou hadſt bequeath'd ten Shillings to ſome Orator of *Grub ſtreet* to have compoſed thy Funeral Oration when thou wert gone, this fulſom Stuff might have been ſaid out of the Abundance of his Heart for thy Generoſity; but indeed it is not decent for thee, it is too much thus to flatly white-waſh thy ſelf, as thy Term is.

But now for a Touch upon Satyr. Mr. *Bayes*, whenever he finds his Name in the Satyrical Works of Mr. *Pope*, he is ſure he writes againſt him not out of *Malice*, but for *Profit*; *for his Face and Name are more known than thoſe of many Thouſands*, ſo *heigh for a Lick at the Laureat*, *ad captandum Vulgus*. After this he ſlides into a Touch of Satyr himſelf on the ſmall Retailers of Politicks, who have ſometimes been a little free with him; and ſays, *it is evident, how eaſy it is to be ſatyrical from the comfortable Subſiſtence, which our weekly Retailers of Politicks have been known to pick up, merely by making bold with a Government who had unfortunately*

nately neglected to find their Genius a better Employment.

Ods me! Mr. *Bayes*, we are all wrong here; do not meddle with Politicks by any means, you may burn your Fingers, and set the whole *irritabile Genus* of Anti-ministerial Writers on your Back at once; or what may be worse, as you very pleasantly say somewhere, this Notice you take of 'em may give 'em a Dinner, by selling a Reply; for they are very sharp sett. And notwithstanding what you insinuate of the comfortable Subsistence they pick up by their weekly retailing of Politicks, they may endeavour to raise their political Rents a little by a Lash at the Laureat too; and perhaps they may have Ill-Nature enough to say, that there is a certain Band of low pensionary Caterpillars who do really gain a comfortable Subsistence by retailing of daily Nonsense in Defence of a certain *A*---- in which Band it is thought you have been long inrolled, a private Centinel at least.

In this your ingenious Digression upon Satyr, Sir, you are likewise somewhat troubled because Mr. *P*---wrote some severe Verses on Mr. *A--n*; and again much pleased that the same Mr. *P*--- commends Mr. *A*--Here your Passions play very prettily, and there seems to be some Humanity in your Composition. But how comes it to pass that you are wholly unconcerned when the Wits attack you, for then you say you are quite insensible; nay, you say *Insensibility has its Happiness* (a new Idea, not quite clear); but you

are miſtaken, you have great Joy in making theſe Scriblers againſt you infamous and immortal, by recording them in this your never-dying Work.

Surely nothing was ever ſo unequal as this Man, for he who was but juſt now in the higheſt good Humour with himſelf, the Envy of the World, and almoſt ſuperior to the Race of Men, in two Pages after, ſinks himſelf as low as to the Loweſt, and declares it is his real Opinion. He proteſts, he ſays it *honeſtly of himſelf*, that he is *impudent*, *a doating Fool*, *an old Trifler*, *a conceited Coxcomb*; *that his Style is frothy*, *and party colour'd*, *like Harlequin's Coat*, *cram'd with Epithets*, *ſtrew'd with ſecond-Hand Scraps of* Latin *from common Quotations*; *that his Book aims only at Wit*, *and is a Ragouſt of Offals*.

This Gentleman has aſſuredly the moſt Ingenuity, at this Moment, and the moſt Modeſty of any Writer, antient or modern, that ever ſet Pen to Paper: And here one cannot help thinking one ſees ſome of his illuſtrious Patrons and Subſcribers reading this Paragraph of their Apologiſt, and ſtaring at this Deſcription he gives of his own Capacity with ſome Surpriſe; and who, accuſtom'd to admire his prodigious Parts, and to credit his Aſſertions, wonder what is the Meaning of this ſtrange Abuſe of their Client in this dirty Manner; for they muſt imagine this Clauſe to be foiſted in by ſome Enemy to the Laureat, who they could

by

by no Means conceive would impoſe a Guinea Tax upon them for a Book written by ſuch an impertinent Dotard, *&c.* as he makes *Colley* honeſtly ſay he is.

But this Buſineſs will clear up immediately, and we ſhall find that all this is a Bite, a Joke, a Sort of *Harlequin*'s Coat, as he calls it, that he puts on, and tickles himſelf to Death to pleaſe his Readers. I muſt confeſs I was inclined when I firſt peruſed this ſelf-denying Clauſe, to pity a poor Creature, thus humbled to the Duſt in his own Opinion, ſo penitential and ſo contrite; but upon reading a little lower in the ſame Page, I find this is all Grimace, a mere *Jeu de Theatre*. He is like Sir *Oliver Cockwood* in his Penitentials for a Scene or two, as having the Fear of the Criticks before his Eyes, but ſo ſoon as that ſhort Qualm is paſt, he riſes at once, ſtands on Tiptoe, and bullies the World; he cries aloud, he cares not who writes againſt him, but he gives a particular Indulgence to poor Writers, or Writers who are poor:---Why aye, if they are Beggars, *let 'em write and go to Dinner i' God's Name.*

Theſe Things ſpeak themſelves. Could Mr. *Bays* be more ſufficient; could Mr. *Bays* himſelf, I mean the Original in the *Rehearſal*, be more conceited or ridiculous.

All we can collect from this Rhapſody, this incoherent Jumble of Ideas, diſorderly and wild as a Sick Man's Dream, is, that he has ſome Title to the Laurel, ſince very thin Partitions divide

divide his Wit from his Wildneſs: For now truly he will needs give us a Satyr written by himſelf againſt himſelf. Why?----To bite his Friends, it ſeems; and yet it is ſomewhat ſtrange they ſhould not find him out in this thin Diſguiſe. The Things, he calls Verſes, carry the moſt evident Marks of their Parent *Colley*; and one would think nobody who had ever read an Ode of his, could poſſibly miſtake 'em. But to what real Purpoſe was all this? Why truly he had a ſtrong Deſire to head the poetical Cry againſt himſelf, and this was the Whim of it; and thus he concludes this Chapter with ſome excellent Lines of Dr. *Young*.

CHAP. III.

Fortune doubtful what to do with the APOLOGIST. *His Hand in the Revolution. Falls in Love, and turns Politician.*

THIS is (it ſeems) the Criſis of our *Apologiſt*'s Life, when Fortune was in a good deal of Doubt with herſelf what ſhe ſhould do with him, into what Shape ſhe ſhould caſt him; whether ſhe ſhould bedeck him with Lawn Sleeves, give him a Truncheon, or make him Secretary of State. But alas! ſhe dropt her great Deſigns in his Favour, and ſo he could be none of theſe; neither cou'd he be

choſen

choſen into the College of *Wincheſter*, tho' the Founder's Kinſman; ſo he return'd to *London*, and *imbib'd* (a polite Word) an Inclination for the Stage; then went back to his Father at *Chattſworth*; when *the Nation fell in Labour* of the *Revolution*. This is one of the curious Flowers, gentle Reader, of which you may gather abundantly in Mr. *Bayes*'s Garden. Either good Wits jump, or he has made bold to borrow this warm Metaphor from his great Predeceſſor Mr. *Dryden*, who, in his *Conqueſt of Mexico*, has theſe Lines.

As if our old World modeſtly withdrew,
And here in private had brought forth a new.

Thus burleſq'd by a noble Poet.

To make th' old World a new withdrawing Room,
Where of another World ſhe's brought to Bed;
What a rare Midwife is a LAUREAT'S *Head.*

About this Time our Hero, we have his Honour's Word for it, had a conſiderable Hand in the glorious Revolution: Let us drink to the immortal Memory of King *William*, and of *Colley Cibber: For the Fate of* Colley Cibber, *King* James, *and the Prince of* Orange, *were at once upon the Anvil.* And yet his Ambition is not ſo warm, notwithſtanding his Succeſs in Arms, but that he condeſcends to ſhew ſome Concern, that he was not deſigned to write *Paſtoral Letters*; but at laſt he ſeems to be in

ſome Meaſure ſatisfied that the Care of the Church is in better Hands.

But on a ſudden, (for there is no keeping his wandering Head to one Point) he turns Politician once again, and out bolt ſome very wonderful and original *Anecdotes* in Policy. He cries out in a Rapture, *Happy Nation!* (meaning old *England) who are never divided among themſelves, but when they have leaſt to complain of.* Now People have generally imagin'd, till this important Diſcovery of our Friend, that a Nation are never divided among themſelves, but when there is ſomething to complain of. Ay, but he is ſure People grumble only for Want of Places. Hail! Poet Laureat, of all the ſcribbling Dunces in *Great Britain, facile Princeps,* thou haſt a Place, and filleſt it with full as much Dignity and Capacity as many of thy Superiors. But *Colley* ſays, as for Miniſters, he cannot forbear thinking that they who have been longeſt railed at, *muſt from that Circumſtance, ſhew in ſome Sort, a Proof of Capacity.* Here we muſt differ again; for one wou'd imagin that a Miniſter who has been rail'd at a long Time, may have deſerved to have been rail'd at a long Time; nor do we ſo clearly conceive why this *Circumſtance* of his being rail'd at, ſhould be a Proof of a Miniſter's Capacity; may it not be a Proof, I think it is a very ſtrong one, that the People ſuſpect his Want of Capacity or Integrity, or both: For ſurely they don't hate him, becauſe they love him.---For ſhame---ha' done,

ha'

ha' done, good Laureat, away with your State-Paradoxes, and face about to your Hiſtory again.

Aye but now, inſtead of writing his own Hiſtory, he gives us the Nation's Chronicle (but we muſt pardon him, he is ſpinning a Folio) He tells you then, what you may have heard before, *That Queen* Elizabeth *govern'd by the Love of the People, and that the Love of the People was the ſureſt Support of her Throne.* Here, by good Luck, he is quite right, and he may add to this Maxim, if he pleaſes, another: That, *The Throne of a Prince, who has not the Love of his People, is in a tottering Condition.* However the Hiſtoriographer concludes with aſſuring us once more, that *it is a ſolid Comfort to him to think that he, among others,* had a Hand in, and brought about the Revolution.

And now, while theſe Things were tranſacting, a moſt terrible Accident happen'd to our young Poet; for he, while waiting at Table at *Nottingham*, fell (*as Scrub ſays*) moſt damnably and deſperately in Love with Lady *Churchill*, now Dutches Dowager of *Marlborough*; and what is ſurpriſingly remarkable, this Paſſion has lain concealed in his Breaſt from the Revolution to this Day, even full fifty Years, and he gives her Grace, as in Duty and Paſſion bound, on this Occaſion, a very florid, but juſt *Eulogium.*

After this, he preſents us with another Anecdote, *viz.* that the Prince and Princeſs of *Orange* were made King and Queen; upon which (hav-

ing done the Buſineſs of the Nation) he returned unwounded and in Peace to his Father at *Chattſworth*. And here in a moſt ſurpriſing Manner, he takes a leap of forty Years forward, to tell us Stories of what happen'd while he was a Menager; particularly, of a Duel between Captain *Montague*, and Mr. Secretary *Craggs*, about an Inſult offer'd to Miſs *Santloe*, (afterwards Mrs. *Booth)* and after this enters into the Unreaſonableneſs and Injuſtice of inſulting Actors on the Stage; and then tells the Actors, very rightly, that thoſe among 'em who wou'd be reſpected on the Stage, muſt be irreproachable in their Morals and Manners off on't; that there are more Requiſites, to make an accompliſh'd Actor, than a good tragic Writer; and that however, undaunted, and with a View of ſucceeding, he became an Actor at eighteen Years of Age. So we have at laſt got him upon the Stage, but not without attending him to the 75th Page of his Octavo Edition.

CHAP. IV.

Two Playhouſes at the Reſtoration. They were incorporated. Betterton's *Character, a Digreſſion of the Remarker.* Colley *ſuſpects himſelf formerly to have been a barren-pated Scribler.*

HE ſays, two Patents were granted at the Revolution, one to Sir *William Davenant*, the other to *Henry Killegrew*, Eſq; that Eloquence and Elocution are different Things; that before this Time Boys acted Womens Parts, which was the Reaſon *Shakeſpear* never wrote any great Parts for the Ladies; that neither Houſe broke in upon, or acted Plays appropriated to the other; for ſhould they have repeated the ſame, he asks us, in the *Cibberian Style*, *What Pleaſure is not languid to Satiety?* He is much againſt two Houſes being open at once; becauſe, and a good Reaſon it is, one wou'd be always full, two would not; and the Menager has taſted many Years the Sweets of full Houſes; for, ſays he, when they act the ſame Plays, on the ſame Days, at both Houſes, it is very like having *two Legs of Mutton, and two Puddings for the ſame Dinner.* And ſo one of theſe two Houſes, *viz.* Sir *William Davenant*'s, was forced to ſupply Senſe with Sound, and

and Dramatick Opera's came into play, and good acting, tho' prais'd, was turn'd out o' Doors; for what is *unprofitable Praiſe, it can hardly give* Truth *a Soup Maigre for Supper.*

But at laſt both Companies united in 1684. And here he enters on the Character of *Betterton*, who was moſt certainly the compleateſt Actor we ever could boaſt of; he had the largeſt Compaſs of Action; he could throw himſelf into many and quite oppoſite and different Shapes, from *Peircy* to *Falſtaff*, from *Othello* to *Therſites*, from *Brutus* to Sir *Solomon Single*, &c. And here our *Apologiſt* talking of this great Actor in the Part of *Hamlet*, chuſes to introduce his *Eulogium* on him, by his firſt Attack upon Mr. *Wilks*. *You have ſeen*, ſays he, *an* Hamlet, *who on the firſt Appearance of his Father's Spirit, threw himſelf into ſtrange Vociferations, expreſſing Rage and Fury*; and he *has been applauded. Wilks* play'd this Part with great Decency and Juſtneſs, and always with the general Approbation of the Audience. If in ſome Places he wanted that Strength of Voice and Dignity of Aſpect, that Mr. *Bayes* has ſeen in *Betterton*, this is only ſaying, that he had not his Perſon and Voice, that he was not *Betterton*; therefore here, I think, Sir, you went out of your Way, purely to make an invidious Reflection. Your Obſervation upon Mr. *Booth* too, (tho' it ſhould be true) is not quite ſo tender a one as it ought to have been on a deceas'd Brother: You ſay, he ſometimes *heavily dragg'd*

dragg'd the Sentiment along like a dead Weight, with a long-ton'd Voice, (he means drawling out his Words) *and abſent Eye, as if they had fairly forgot what they were about.*

And here I ſubmit my ſelf to the Indulgence of my Reader for a ſhort Digreſſion: I have lately been told by a Gentleman who has frequently ſeen Mr. *Betterton* perform this Part of *Hamlet*, that he has obſerv'd his Countenance (which was naturally ruddy and ſanguin) in this Scene of the fourth Act, where his Father's Ghoſt appears, thro' the violent and ſudden Emotions of Amazement and Horror, turn inſtantly on the Sight of his Father's Spirit, as pale as his Neckcloath, when every Article of his Body ſeem'd to be affected with a Tremor inexpreſſible; ſo that, had his Father's Ghoſt actually riſen before him; he could not have been ſeized with more real Agonies; and this was felt ſo ſtrongly by the Audience, that the Blood ſeemed to ſhudder in their Veins likewiſe, and they in ſome Meaſure partook of the Aſtoniſhment and Horror, with which they ſaw this excellent Actor affected. And when *Hamlet* utters this Line, upon the Ghoſt's leaving the Stage, (in Anſwer to his Mother's impatient Enquiry into the Occaſion of his Diſorder, and what he ſees)---*See---where he goes--ev'n now---out at the Portal:* The whole Audience hath remain'd in a dead Silence for near a Minute, and then,---as if recovering all at once from their Aſtoniſhment, have joined as one

one Man, in a Thunder of univerſal Applauſe. And yet, the ſame Gentleman aſſured me, he has ſeen Mr. *Betterton*, more than once, play this Character to an Audience of twenty Pounds, or under.

Here I am oblig'd to do our *Apologiſt* the Juſtice to allow, that what he ſays in general with Relation to this great Actor is very juſt, as well as his Obſervation that the Fuſtian and Nonſenſe of many of our Tragic Writers, were copied after *Nat. Lee*, particularly his *Alexander*, *Cæſar Borgia*, &c. and he might add ſome of them too after *Dryden*, as his *Almanzor*, *Tyrannick Love*, &c. Our *Apologiſt* likewiſe is pretty right, *where he hints*, that he ſuſpects one *Colley Cibber* formerly to have been in the Number of theſe *barren pated Scriblers*, *whoſe Brains have ſtreamed into a frothy flowing Style*, *rounding into rolling Periods*, *ſignifying nothing*.

CHAP. V.

Booth *in the right in the Part of* Morat. Richard III. *how acted by* Cibber. *Why Mrs.* Bracegirdle *left the Stage. Our Modern Criticks why ſo vivacious now. The Reſtraint on the Stage condemn'd.*

IN this Chapter, he continues his Theatrical Characters. He begins with *Kynaſton*, who was, in my Memory, a very good Actor. But here (I am concern'd it ſhould ſo happen) I muſt again differ from our *Apologiſt*; when he ſays, Mr. *Booth* was guilty of a Miſtake in pronouncing ſome Lines in *Morat*, *(in Aurenzeb)* that he thought the ludicrous Sentiments put into the Mouth of that Character, depreciated the Dignity of the *Buskin*, and therefore cover'd the Sentiments, and deliver'd them coldly, for fear he ſhould make his Auditors ſmile. I am of Opinion, *Booth* was not wrong in this. There are many of the Sentiments in this Character, where Nature and common Senſe are outraged; and an Actor, who ſhou'd give the full comic Utterance to them in his Delivery, would raiſe what they call a *Horſe-Laugh*, and turn it into Burleſque. I have ſeen the Original *Syphax* in *Cato*, uſe many ridiculous

Diſtortions, crack in his Voice, and wreathe his Muſcles and his Limbs, which created not a Smile of Approbation, but a loud Laugh of Contempt and Ridicule on the Actor. This muſt be very diſadvantageous to the warm and beautiful Lines of the Poet; and he muſt excuſe me from giving intire Credit to him, when he ſays, that Mr. *Addiſon* came into his Opinion, that he did Juſtice to the Character of *Syphax*. Mr. *Addiſon* was the moſt tender Author in theſe Points, that ever truſted a Play on the Stage. When he found it could not be help'd, and that *Syphax* muſt be *Cibber*, and *Cibber Syphax*, he was obliged to acquieſce, but he cou'd never take that for a Mark of Approbation, which was always a Mark of Diſapprobation: Nor cou'd he bear to ſee his rough *Numidian* turn'd into a Fop, nor the noble Sentiments he has put into his Mouth, murder'd by the diſagreeable Voice and Action of the Performer. In my Opinion, the Part of *Syphax*, as it was originally play'd, was the only Part in *Cato* not tolerably executed.

But let me give you a ſtrong, a high Inſtance of the ludicrous in Tragedy, where the Capital Character was play'd by a *Comedian*, (by a *Comedian*, I mean one whoſe whole Force lay in comic Parts). The Play of *Richard* the third was alter'd, as the Phraſe is, from *Shakeſpear*; that is, a Play of *Shakeſpear* is vamp'd up by ſome modern *poetical Botcher* for his own Benefit; for this intitled him then to the Profits of a

third Night, *&c.* as if he were really the Author. This was *Shakeſpear's* Misfortune here. The *Botcher* indeed had, beſides mangling and leaving out many beautiful and juſt Images in the Original, made him full Amends, as he thought, by ranſacking all his Works, and pillaging almoſt all the fine Images he could find in this great Poet's Plays, to inrich this *One*. But when it came to be acted, you may remember, Sir, this ſame Mender of *Shakeſpear* choſe the principal Part, *viz. the King*, for himſelf; and accordingly being inveſted with the purple Robe, he ſcreamed thro' four Acts without Dignity or Decency. The Audience ill-pleas'd with the Farce, accompany'd him with a Smile of Contempt; but in the fifth Act, he degenerated all at once into Sir *Novelty*; and when in the Heat of the Battle at *Boſworth Field*, the King is diſmounted, our Comic-Tragedian came on the Stage, really breathleſs, and in a ſeeming Panick, ſcreaming out this Line thus---*A Harſe, a Harſe, my Kingdom for a Harſe*. This highly delighted ſome, and diſguſted others of his Auditors; and when he was kill'd by *Richmond*, one might plainly perceive that the good People were not better pleas'd that ſo *execrable a Tyrant* was deſtroy'd, than that ſo *execrable an Actor* was ſilent. Now, Sir, as to Sir *John Vanbrugh*'s flattering our *Apologiſt* in the Character of King *Richard*, he might pleaſe him for ought I know, and he might have a very bad Taſte; for you are ſenſible the general Taſte

was againſt him; and if he was ſo very like *Sandford*, as Sir *John* ſaid he was, this will give us but a mean Idea of *Sandford* as an Actor.

The *Apologiſt*'s Characters of the reſt of the Actors about this Time, may be very juſt for ought I know; yet, I think with him, theſe Sketches of 'em can give but little Entertainment to thoſe who never ſaw 'em. But I have heard that one of the beſt and moſt admired Actreſſes, mention'd here, left the Stage in the *Haymarket*, ſome Years afterwards, upon Mrs. *Oldfield*'s (then a younger and much inferior Actreſs) being preferr'd to ſome Parts before her by our very *Apologiſt*; and yet the *Inconſtant* tells you, when he was a young Actor, his higheſt Ambition was, to have play'd a Lover with her on the Stage. We may obſerve too here, what I never cou'd have diſcover'd, where he borrow'd (why ſhould I, tho' it is ſo old and ſo trite a Subject of Ridicule, be defrauded of my Share of it in theſe Remarks, becauſe Mr. *Bayes* gives it up himſelf, and owns it to be Nonſenſe) Mrs. *Oldfield's Outdoing her uſual Outdoings*. *Dryden*, it ſeems, had complemented Mrs. *Barry* in his Preface to *Cleomenes*, in a Sentiment which *Colley* deſign'd ſhould carry the ſame Idea, but *Dryden* confines it to common Senſe, and only ſays---Mrs. *Barry*, *always excellent, has in this Tragedy excell'd herſelf*.

I agree with you in the Reflections with which you cloſe this Chapter, relating to the hard Condition of thoſe who write for the Stage, and

and the outrageous Malevolence, as *Wicherly* names 'em, of our *Antemanum Criticks*, who damn the Play before the Curtain is drawn up. But let me tell you, Laureat, theſe ſame Criticks have much more Reaſon to exert their Vivacity now, than while you were upon the Stage. When they are to receive nothing but from the Hand of a *Licencer*, they are apt to have a Diſtaſte for whatever he licences, whatever he approves; and he perhaps may not think it proper to give 'em what he thinks they will approve: Thus this *Ferula & Feſcu*, as *Milton* calls it, in the *Stage Licencer's Hand*, like the ſame Inſtruments in his Time in the Hands of the Licencers of the Preſs, may become odious Tools of Tyranny in both Caſes; and we may be aſſured that until that Law which has given the Stage a Licencer, ſhall, in ſome Clauſes of it, be ſoften'd or repealed, no Dramatic Poetry can ever riſe again; and, to uſe your own Epithets, a good Play, *the moſt rational, the higheſt Entertainment that human Invention can produce*, muſt lie dormant and unſeen.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The Apologiſt *writes his firſt Comedy.* Betterton *and ſome Capital Actors deſert from the Patentees.* Bayes *copies* Dogget *in* Nykin. *Some Part of* Bayes's *Character.* *Sir* John Vanbrugh's *Hiſtory.* Colley *would fain be thought a good* Tragedian.

WE find our Hero in this Chapter, but a conſiderable Time after his inliſting, enters into Pay, into a Salary of ten Shillings *per* Week, and *Goodman* propheſies, that he will turn out a good Player. He writes a Comedy, his firſt Play, *Love's laſt Shift*, the Fable of which, and ſome Scenes intire, and the Subſtance of others, are taken, as I have heard, from one of *Fletcher*'s Plays; nor do I mention this, to take from the Merit of his Performance, which I always thought an entertaining Comedy, but to ſhew that he is not over-fond of owning his Benefactors; but Mr. *Southern* liked it, and what blow'd his Vanity much higher, the late moſt ingenious Lord *Dorſet* commended it. This may be true; and ſo he did a Tragedy of a celebrated Poet, ſome Years after, which the *Bard* had left with him for his Approbation, who, when he thanked him

him for the Favour, aſſured him, *There was not one Word of* COMMON SENSE *in it.* The Author took his leave of him, well pleaſed with the *uncommon* Complement: The Tragedy had very great Succeſs; and tho' there are many beautiful Images and much fine Poetry in it, that glare upon an Audience, the Conduct of it is, *almoſt throughout*, abſurd and unnatural. I do not name it, leaſt when I oppoſe this eſtabliſh'd Piece, and the general Voice, I ſhould be deemed guilty of poetical Hereſy.

The Patentees, ſome Time before this, diſoblige their Actors, and *Betterton*, at the Head of many of the beſt of them, revolt, and obtain a Licence to act in *Lincolns-Inn-Fields*. On this Occaſion, Mr. *Apologiſt* adviſes all future Menagers to do Juſtice to their Actors; and he adviſes well. He ſays he follow'd this prudent Rule when a Menager himſelf. How well he follow'd it, ſeveral of thoſe very Actors now remaining are ready to teſtify. They know well that he was always againſt raiſing, or rewarding, or by any means encouraging Merit of any Kind; they know how many Diſputes he had with *Wilks* on this Account, who was impatient, when Juſtice required it, to reward the Meritorious. This mean Spirit of our *Apologiſt* ſometimes degenerated almoſt into the Want of common Humanity to his Inferiors; and this, together with his ungentleman-like Treatment of Writers of all Claſſes, gain'd him almoſt the gene-

ral

ral Odium of the People, both within and without the Doors of the *Theatre*.

He values himſelf, as a good Copy of *Dogget*, in the Part of *Nykin*, or *Fondlewife*, in the *Old Batchelor*. I think, in ſome Parts he follows him well; but, in my Opinion, on the whole, he over-does it much. The Character appears too vigorous and robuſt in ſome Places, which *Dogget* kept under in a lower Key, and ſtuck much cloſer to Nature.

He now goes off to the Hiſtory of Sir *John Vanbrugh*, leaſt, as he ſays, his own Hiſtory ſhould grow flat. He begins and gives the Story of Sir *John*'s Life and Writings. Oh rare *Colley*, this Rule of ſpinning thou ſtoleſt from the common Manner of Romances, who moſt ingeniouſly lengthen out their amorous Lies by giving us the Hiſtory and Adventures of every Perſon concern'd in their idle Tales. But hold a little, all this by the Bye, is only to let us know that he acted *Æſop* mighty well; for it ſeems, *Loves laſt Shift*, the *Relapſe*, and *Æſop*, were the Plays that enabled the Company under the Patent to oppoſe *Betterton*, and to get the better of that Company of veteran and accompliſh'd Actors. So our *Drawcanſir*, with a little Help from *Vanbrugh*, demoliſh'd the other Houſe. And yet he confeſſes afterwards that *Betterton* and his *Copartners* deſtroy'd themſelves for Want of Induſtry, and by dividing into ſeparate Intereſts.---*What an inconſiſtent wild Creature!*

Our

Our Laureat now would have us to know, tho' he confeſſes his Voice unequal to Tragedy, that he wore the Buskin in ſeveral Parts with Succeſs; and he mentions *Iago*, *Wolſey*, *Syphax* and *Richard the Third*. As to *Iago*, I have often heard him blamed as a Trifler in that Part; he was rarely perfect, and, abating for the Badneſs of his Voice, and the Inſignificancy and Meanneſs of his Action, he did not ſeem to underſtand either what he ſaid or what he was about. But he would fain perſuade us that the few good Judges liked him. How do we know that? The Majority (which he owns ought to have ſome Weight) diſliked him; and give us leave to affirm too, many good Judges went with the Majority. In *Wolſey* he was much the ſame as in *Iago*, only in ſome Places where there is a Dignity in the Penitence and the Humility of the Cardinal at his Fall, his Action and his Voice carry it into Ridicule and Farce; what he appear'd to be in *Syphax* and in *Richard* III. we have already ſaid. Now how odd is it, that he ſhould take ſo much Pains, that he ſhould labour ſo hard to be thought to be (what he himſelf owns he cou'd not by Nature be) a good Tragedian; every Body owns him excellent in Comedy in ſeveral Walks---but *nitimur invetita*---Well---But at length he inclines to give up his Pretenſions to the *Buskin*; yet he ſeems wonderfully delighted that he has been thought a bad Man from his acting vicious Characters. It is a Proof,

he ſays, that he play'd 'em well.---It may be ſo,---and if his being thought a bad Man proceeded only from thence, he is in ſome Meaſure wrong'd; for I think, ſomewhere in this voluminous Trifle, he adviſes Actors to be very careful of their moral Characters, for that they will be valued on the Stage according to their Behaviour when not upon it.

CHAP. VII.

Comedians and Tragedians diſagree. Upper Gallery Doors open. Unlick'd Cubs behind the Scenes. *Hiſtory of* Wilks. Love in a Riddle. *A Stone thrown on the Stage in* Richard III. *The* Apologiſt *Cabinet Councellor to the Patentee. Makes* Wilks *firſt* Miniſter, *and laſhes him.*

THE *Apologiſt* lets us know, that the *Lincolns-Inn-Fields* Company were now (in 1693) a *Common-wealth*, like *Holland*, but they could not unite: The Tragedians and Comedians cou'd by no means agree; they ſquabbled juſt like Majority and Minority in *Senates*---*George Powel* cou'd not bear *Cibber's* Finery in the *Relapſe*; and *Tom Dogget* was diſguſted at *Betterton's* Plumes and Embroidery. They each of them revolt; but *Powel* was an idle

idle and *Dogget* an odd Fellow, who never could be eaſy any where. *Rich*, ſoon after this, (*Colley* ſays) that he might be well with the Domeſticks of People of Quality, open'd the upper Gallery to the Footmen; and this was, it is true, the Source of great Misfortunes. And to be well with the Quality themſelves, he tells us, the Scenes were open'd to *many ordinary People* and *unlick'd Cubs of Condition*, and they were forc'd to ſhut them afterwards at the Hazard of their Lives.

But now *Wilks* comes upon the Stage, and he gives us his Hiſtory. He was a *Clerk* in the Secretary's Office at the *Revolution*. The Gentleman who ſucceeded him in the Office, Mr. *Dawſon*, as I have heard likewiſe, rais'd a Fortune of 50000 Pounds; but *Wilks*, as well as our Author, would be a mock Prince; for *Cibber* himſelf narrowly eſcaped being in the Secretaries Office once. A great Lord ſaid, he wou'd think of him: Well, but *Wilks* went to *Ireland*; and on the Death of *Monfort* returned to *Drury-Lane*. The firſt Part he played was *Palamede* in *Dryden's Marriage Alamode*. *The Ball was play'd into his Hand by Mrs.* Monfort. This is a cant Theatrical Phraſe, and means that the Lady who acts with her Lover, plays up to him, or with equal Spirit and Underſtanding, which they call *returning the Ball*. I remember I had the Pleaſure to ſee *Wilks* play this Part of *Palamede* on his firſt Appearance after his Return from *Ireland*. He ſpoke a Prologue written by Mr. *Farquhar*;

quhar; and was received with great and general Applauſe. He was even then, in the Opinion of the *Connoſſeurs*, eſteem'd much the beſt Comedian in the Character of a Gentleman upon the Stage: For *Powel*, notwithſtanding Mr. *Baye*'s Opinion, never cou'd appear ſuch; his Converſation, his Manners, his Dreſs, neither on nor off the Stage, bore any Similitude to that Character, *Wilks* in this Part of *Palamede*, behav'd with a modeſt Diffidence, and yet maintain'd the Spirit of his Part; and this gain'd mightily on the Affections of his Auditors. I believe he was obliged to fight the Heroic *George Powel*, as well as one or two others, who were piqued at his being ſo highly encouraged by the Town, and their Rival, before he cou'd be quiet. For the Scenes were not civiliz'd at this Time. Whatever the Actors appear'd upon the Stage, they were moſt of them *Barbarians* off on't, few of them having had the Education, or whoſe Fortunes could admit them to the Converſation of Gentlemen. They did not attempt to excell, but to drub down a riſing Genius; ſo that *Robin Wilks*, like the great *Czar Peter*, (let me compare him to one Emperor, *Colley* has made himſelf like ſeveral) was forced to correct before he could civilize his People. But without inſiſting on the Alluſion, this was the Caſe, he actually by Example and Diſcipline poliſhed them; and whatever Errors and Indecencies they might commit off the Stage, he wou'd by no Means permit any Thing like it there; ſo that at laſt

laſt they mixt with Gentlemen of the politeſt Taſte, and were well receiv'd every where. As to his Diligence, it was equal to his Capacity. Whatever Part fell to his Share, he was ſure to be perfect in it; and whether the Words or the Buſineſs of it were to his Palate or otherwiſe, he never, out of an idle Impertinence, was ſolicitous about ſhortening or cutting of it, which you know well, Mr. *Bayes*, has often been the Caſe of a Friend of yours; he, *Wilks*, modeſtly thought it his Duty, not only to get the Words, but to give them all the Grace of Action he was capable of; and then he left the Succeſs to the Public. Thus he did himſelf and his Author Juſtice. I have indeed ſometimes been ſurpriſed, as our *Apologiſt* ſays, to ſee a Man Maſter of ſo exact, ſo literal, and ſo ſtrong a Memory. I have known him lay a Wager, and win it, that he wou'd repeat the Part of *Truewitt* in the *Silent Woman*, which conſiſts of thirty Lengths of Paper, as they call 'em, (that is, one Quarter of a Sheet on both Sides to a Length) without miſplacing a ſingle Word, or miſſing an (*and*) or an (*or*).

And now he preſents us with the Story of *Love in a Riddle*, and well worth your hearing it is, which, he ſays, was written to recommend *Virtue* and *Innocence*; and wou'd inſinuate that it died a Martyr to a falſe Tale that had been invented, as if he had Intereſt enough at Court to get the ſecond Part of the *Beggar's Opera interdicted*; and that this was the Occaſion of its ſudden

ſudden Death. I will tell you, Mr. *Bayes*, I was preſent the firſt Night of the Performance of this Piece of *Innocence* of your inditing. The People in the Beginning of the Play ſeemed inclinable to attend, and give it a fair Hearing; but when you appeared, and began to ſing in the Character of *Philautos*, ſo I think you call yourſelf, (and by the Way, an excellent proper Name it is for you in private Life.) When you began to ſing, I ſay, not in a mimick, not in a falſe, but in your own real natural Voice, and they found that you intended to impoſe this upon 'em for Harmony, which they perceiv'd hurt their Ears extremely, they did grow ſomewhat outrageous, and in the ſecond Act they call'd aloud ſeveral Times to have the Curtain dropt; but *Philautos* came forward and humbly petition'd, that they would hear him one Song more. They granted his Requeſt, and then damn'd his *new-fangled innocent Performance:* I remember Mrs. *Thurmond*, who play'd ſome Sheperdeſs or other in this Piece, came on to attack *Philautos* with a Boar Spear; and as ſhe held it level to his Perſon, ſome ill-natur'd Perſons cried out from the Pit, *Kill him, kill him*; at which *Philautos* ſtarted back, a good deal frighted. What you ſay of your Behaviour on the ſecond Day when the *Prince* was preſent, is, as near as my Memory will retain it, literally true.

Your

Your Behaviour on the ſecond Night of this Piece of *Innocence*, was like a good Philoſopher and a good Subject. Here you held your Paſſion under the Curb of Reaſon, and perhaps it might be the only Tumult *ſo effectually appeas'd:* For ſome Years before this, you may recollect better than I, the Occaſion, there was a diſagreeable Miſunderſtanding between you and the Town, and while you were debating with ſome of the *Wrong-heads*, Oranges, Apples, Turnips, *&c.* flew at your devoted Head from the Galleries, and among the reſt of their Artillery a Stone, which put you, as well it might, into a ſudden Tremor. Every civiliz'd Creature indeed in the Audience was offended; but your Wrath, agitated by your Fear, left you quite thoughtleſs; and ſo you came forward, and offer'd *two Guineas Reward to any Perſon who ſhould diſcover the Hand that threw this Stone.* I think you did not add, ſo that he might be convicted thereof: And nobody caring to turn Informer at your Requeſt, or the *Præmium* being too ſmall, you know it increas'd the Tumult, and you were obliged to drop the Curtain; and were prevented from diſplaying the Heroic Actions of *Richard the Third* that Night.

Our *Apologiſt* gives us an Account hereabouts, *(viz.* p. 207.) how he became Cabinet Counſellor to his Prince the *Patentee*; and in what Manner he there play'd *Wilks* againſt *Powel*; for that tho' the *Patentee* (he ſays) was a cun-

a cunning Lawyer, and knew little of the Stage Merit, he had an Opinion of his Wiſdom. Here he lauds himſelf mainly; for he ſays, he was *prais'd by few, but they were the beſt Judges.* He choſe his Parts by Weight, others by Meaſure; he knew more than *Powel* or *Wilks*; and yet notwithſtanding all this wonderful Merit, neither the *Town nor his Maſter valued it.* He does not reflect this *Merit* of his was all this while not diſcovered by any Body but himſelf, and a few good Judges, who made a Secret of it too for their own Sakes: However, he turns out *Miniſter Powel*, and *Miniſter Wilks* takes his Place.---- If *Miniſter Wilks* was now alive to hear thee prate thus, Mr. *Bayes*, I would not give one Half-penny for thy Ears; but if he were alive, thou durſt not for thy Ears rattle on in this affected *Machiavilian* Stile. You give us here likewiſe a Specimen of the Debate you had with your Prince on this Occaſion in his Cabinet. All we can find out, upon the whole, from this long and ſilly Tale of yours, is, Sir, that you were a very bad Miniſter to a very bad Tyrant, and that you aided him to inſlave your Fellow Subjects.

But, before this Chapter ends, he muſt have one Laſh more at *Wilks*, tho' he was a *Miniſter* of his own making. He ſays, he *often diſturb'd him, but he often diſorder'd himſelf more.* Prithee, dear *Colley*, be candid; tell us the whole; let us know his Reaſons for diſturbing you: Were you not now and then a little remiſs in

your

your Buſineſs? Were you not ſometimes more pragmatical and impertinent than became you? Did you not often hurt the Theatrical Affairs, by your Avarice and ill Conduct? Did you not, by your general Misbehaviour towards Authors and Actors, bring an *Odium* on your Brother *Menagers*, as well as yourſelf; and were not theſe, with many others, the Reaſons, that ſometimes gave Occaſion to *Wilks*, to chaſtiſe you, with his Tongue only.

CHAP. VIII.

Our Apologiſt *reviles* Rich. *Writes for Bread. His Reaſons in Behalf of the Law for licencing the Stage, refuted. The Reputation of a Miniſter ſacred. The* Apologiſt *will change his Opinion, when the Miniſtry changes.*

HERE he reviles, as bad Miniſters frequently do, his *Prince* the *Patentee*. He ſays, he had *inverted the Conſtitution of the Stage*; for it ſeems he did not pay his Actors nor his *Miniſter*, and ſo he was obliged to write Plays for Bread; and he curiouſly obſerves at the ſame Time, *That his Spouſe and his Muſe were equally prolifick*; and brought forth each a Dozen Plays and Children, of which

ſome died young, &c.---The Knowledge of this is of infinite Conſequence to the Public; but his *ſecond Play*, he being call'd upon *by his Muſe* to write by *Family Duty*, (this is his Expreſſion) *was ſomething defective*, and ſo he will not tell its Name; let my ill-natur'd Memory ſupply that Defect, it was called *Perolla* and *Iſadora*; I will ſay no more of it, the Parent is aſhamed of it. After a great deal of this trifling Stuff, he preſents us with his Reaſons for paſſing the late Law, for reſtraining the Liberty of the Stage, by giving it a Licencer. The principal Occaſion of which, in his Opinion, was the Uncertainty whether Plays might be legally exhibited without a *Licence*, or not. The next was, the *Liberty* taken by a *broken Wit*, whom he will not name, who, becauſe it would not take up much Time to be *intrepidly abuſive*, took the Channel and pelted his Superiors, and ventur'd the *Gallows*, &c. To be *Somebody*, with this *mettleſom Modeſty*, ſays he, he ſet out, and laid *Religion*, *Laws*, *Government*, *Prieſts*, *Judges and Miniſters all under his Feet*, and *wrote up to an Act of Parliament to demoliſh the Stage*; *but he will not make him immortal, by reciting the dreadful Strokes of Wit that made this Havock.* Surely the Strokes of Wit that (more deſtructive than Thunder and Lightning) made all this dreadful Havock, tho' thy Hiſtory had never been thought of, wou'd have been remembred. *But ſo flagrant they were, that the Wiſdom of the Legiſlature thought it*

Time

Time to take a proper Notice of them. So *poignant* they were, that a certain gall'd *Legiſlator* could not bear it. The Author might have ſcoffed at the low Folly and Ignorance of the *Laureat* with Impunity; but this *young and keen Satyriſt* did not delight in ſo mean a Quarry; he flew at higher Game, and ſtruck ſo home that his Honour felt his Sting, and found it intolerable; and immediately ſummoning his whole Power together, he employ'd it, in great Meaſure, in giving Birth to this extraordinary Law, which was, as *Bayes* ſays, oppoſed with *uncommon Eloquence, and a lively and warm Spirit for Liberty.* Lord C---d's Speech on this Occaſion, will live and do him Honour, as long as the *Engliſh* Language ſubſiſts. Our Laureat owns they were fearful that Liberty was ſtruck at in this Bill; but, ſays he, this amounts *to but a Jealouſy at beſt.* But it was a well-grounded Jealouſy; a Jealouſy that gave great and terrible and juſt Apprehenſions to honeſt and diſcerning Men; as it appear'd to them a Forerunner of a Reſtraint on the Liberty of the Preſs, the Corner-Stone of Liberty itſelf, which remov'd, the whole Fabrick falls: They foreſaw that theſe Shackles, clapp'd on the Stage by the ſole Power of a great M----r and his Creatures, pointed out, that Fetters of the ſame Make were preparing for the Preſs: They were very ſenſible that he, who in this and many other Inſtances, had manifeſted the Force of his Authority, would hardly ſtop here; that he who

found he cou'd, to revenge himſelf on the Satyr of *Paſquin*, exert his Power ſo ſucceſsfully and ſo triumphantly, might, whenever he ſo pleas'd, in the ſame Manner and by the ſame Means, reſtrain the great and daily Licence of Writers againſt his A----n. The Laureat now asks, *whether the Honour and Reputation of a Miniſter, is, or ought to be as dear to him as his Life.* It ought to be; but I am afraid that Miniſter who dares to commit iniquitous Actions, is very little concerned about Reputation. The Reputation of an honeſt Man is as dear to him as Life. In the *Squire of Alſatia*, when the Pickpockets or Sharpers are pump'd, ſomebody asks them, how they could ſhew their Faces after it? To which they very juſtly reply, *We, who cou'd ſhew our Faces, after what we have done, may very eaſily ſhew them after what we have ſuffer'd.* Don't you ſee, Laureat, that you beg the Queſtion here? It is certain, the Reputation of a Miniſter ought to be dear to him; and it is certain, he ought to guard more than any private Man, againſt giving a juſt Occaſion for Cenſure. The good or evil Actions of a great Miniſter will, as he is placed on high, in a conſpicuous Point of Light, be the Subject of Praiſe or Satyr, by thoſe below him, who are benefited or injur'd by his good or bad Adminiſtration. In a Word, all that you ſay, and all that you can ſay, about the Neceſſity and Reaſon of this Law, is by no Means to the Purpoſe: For you are to know, Sir, that

before

before this Act, there were ſeveral plain Laws in being, and which are now in being, that can fully and effectually, when put in Execution, defend the Subject againſt all Inſults on Reputation, *&c.* And therefore there could be no Manner of Occaſion for this new Law. I can remember, perhaps you may too, that ſoon after the Publication of *Collier*'s Book, ſeveral Informations were brought againſt the Players, at the Inſtance and Expence of the *Society for the Reformation of Manners*, for immoral Words and Expreſſions, *contra bonos Mores*, utter'd on the Stage. Several Informers were placed in the Pit, and other Parts of the Houſe, to note down the Words ſpoke, and by whom, to be able to ſwear to them; and many of them wou'd have been ruin'd by theſe troubleſom Proſecutions, had not *Queen Anne*, well ſatisfied that theſe *Informers* liv'd upon their Oaths, and that what they did, proceeded not from Conſcience, but from Intereſt, by a timely *Noli proſequi*, put an End to the Inquiſition.

But you ask yourſelf ſomewhat abruptly, *How you came to be ſo voluntary a Champion for this Law:* You anſwer yourſelf, It is *proper for you to be ſo, becauſe it relates to the Theatre, and becauſe you ought fairly to let the People know, how far you are, or are not a Blockhead.* Keep to your ever-laughing Humour, my merry *Laureat*; for believe me, or if I have no Credit with you, believe the reſt of the World, notwithſtanding this Hint of yours to the contrary,

ry, you appear to be more a Blockhead than you imagine, when you talk ſeriouſly.—But, ſay you, *I am happy, I rejoice, that I am thought a Blockhead*;---mighty well:---But why muſt you print it?---*Oh it pleaſes me much---I love to laugh.*---It muſt be confeſs'd, thy Complexion is of a peculiar Caſt, and thou art a Character of more Novelty and Oddity, than any thou didſt ever repreſent.

He reaſons again; *Printed Satyrs, he affirms, can't have half the Force of acted ones. Why? Becauſe acted Satyrs are heard by Crowds at once; printed ones can be read but by one Perſon at once*---Indeed you miſtake; printed Satyrs may be read by ten Thouſand at once, and at ten Thouſand ſeveral Places.

But whatever Weight his Obſervations may have with other People, he is reſolved always to think 'em right, unleſs he ſhould live to ſee a future Set of upright Miniſters repeal this Law.

Ah ha, my Babe of Grace, now you are an excellent Courtier at once, and very politically and wiſely determine to think every Thing right that every Miniſter does; this paſſive Obedience to Miniſters, is a meritorious, a praiſe-worthy Doctrine in a Man, *who has a Penſion or a Place.*

Oh, ſays *Colley*, had this Law been made ſeven Years ago, I ſhould not have parted with my Share. True, my good Friend, it might have been worth ſeven Times as much; you might perhaps,

perhaps, by your great Intereſt, have got the Monopoly of the Stage. This, in my Opinion, is the moſt like an Argument of any you have yet produced in Favour of this Law you are ſo fond of; it is *Argumentum ad Hominem.*

CHAP. IX.

Mrs. Oldfield *her Progreſs on the Stage. Digreſſion of the Remarker.* Verbruggen's *Character. Abſtract of Stage Revolutions. The* Italian *Opera*, &c.

NOW he declares he has tired himſelf and his Readers, but his Vanity, he ſays, holds out ſtill, tho' as yet he has gone thro' but ſeven of the forty three Years he paſſed on the Stage. I am heartily ſorry for it, and ſo I fancy are many of his Readers, beſides myſelf, who perhaps may drag in going thro' ſo much bad Way: But, it ſeems, he has injoin'd himſelf to *tranſmit his Hiſtory to the Judgment or Oblivion of Poſterity*, (tranſmit to *Oblivion, a new Idea).* But we muſt, we ſhall hear how the Playhouſes went on forty Years ago; and thus, after a dull Repetition, candidly deſires his Readers to remember where he left off.

Then

Then he gives us a Sketch of Mrs. *Oldfield*'s Character, and her Progreſs on the Stage, where ſhe was received in 1699. *Leonora* in Sir *Courtly* was the firſt Part, of any Moment, that ſhe acted in the Year 1703, and *Lady Betty Modiſh* in 1704. This was a very quick and ſurpriſing Progreſs indeed. He gives this juſtly celebrated Actreſs her due Character, and not more than her Due. She was, when the Character ſhe repreſented requir'd it, an exact Copy of the Woman of Faſhion, and the modiſh Coquette, as in the *Careleſs Husband*; in *Rule a Wife*---She turn'd herſelf into a roguiſh wheedling artful Miſs, in *Lætitia*; ſhe was the buxom wanton Wife of an old *Cornuto*; and in the latter Part of her Days, ſhe became excellent in Tragedy likewiſe, for which, when ſhe firſt appeared upon the Stage, and for ſome Years after, ſhe had an utter Deteſtation. In a Word, we agree with our *Apologiſt*, *She was, to the laſt Scene ſhe play'd, the Delight of every Spectator*; and therefore, ſays he, why may we not conclude her Character with the ſame Indulgence, with which *Horace* ſpeaks of a good *Poem*——

Ubi plura nitent, non ego Paucis
Offendor Maculis——

Which he tranſlates thus.

Where in the Whole ſuch various Beauties ſhine,
'Twere idle upon Errors to refine.

He means, we ought not to criticiſe a few Errors, when the Beauties outſhine 'em. But I can ſee no Occaſion you have to mention any Errors. She had fewer as an Actreſs than any; and neither you, nor I, have any Right to inquire into her Conduct any where elſe.

On this Occaſion, *honour'd Laureat*, you will permit me to ſtop a while, *&c. more Cibberiano*, to go out of the Way, while I tell you a very ſhort Tale: There liv'd, in my Memory, an excellent, vain, laughing, odd, whimſical, ſelf-ſufficient, humble Actor and Poet; who took it into his Head, when turn'd of his *grand Climacterick*, to write a Book about himſelf, and call it an *Apology for his Life*, &c. This ſame Thing, which went by the Name of a Hiſtory, contain'd, beſides his own Life, the Revolutions of the Stage, during his Time; but all was ſo obſcurely and immethodically executed, that it was almoſt thro' the whole, dull and tedious; the Characters of the old Actors, indeed, ſeemed to be faithfully related, and might be entertaining to thoſe to whom the Subject was grateful. Now, Sir, cou'd this ſame Piece have riſen to the *ubi plura nitent*, I ſhould not have troubled you or the World, with theſe Remarks: But as the frothy Thing is, more than half of it, blown up with tumid Metaphors, ſpun out with impertinent Deviations, crowded with diſtaſteful Sufficiency, every where abounding with palliated Malice, and open Vanity; in many Places dark, and ſome-

times wholly unintelligible; I may be allow'd to ſay of this voluminous Performance

Sunt bona, ſunt quædam mediocria, ſunt mala plura.

There are ſome good Things in thy Book, old Colley,
But all the reſt is, ſelf-ſufficient Folly.

He goes on with dry Stories of the Revolutions of the Stage: He informs us, that the Company with him in *Drury Lane*, by the ingenious Performance and Parts of Mr. *Cibber*, got the better of better Actors, *viz. Betterton*, *Barry*, *Bracegirdle*, &c. I wonder, conſidering our Author's Particularity of Memory, that he hardly ever mentions Mr. *Verbruggen*, who was in many Characters an excellent Actor, as we remember him in *Caſſius*, *Oroonoko*, *Ventidius*, *Chamont*, *Pierre*, *Cethegus*, as well as in ſeveral Parts in Comedy, as the *Rover*, &c. He was an Original, and had a Roughneſs in his Manner, and a negligent agreeable Wildneſs in his Action and his Mein, which became him well. The Part of *Bajazet* in *Tamerlane*, was originally his; and it has never been acted well ſince the firſt three or four Nights of his playing it, when he was taken ill: He continued ſome Years in high and merited Reputation, tho' when he appear'd on the Stage at firſt, for ſome Time, he, as well as our Friend *Colley*, were commonly received with a Hiſs, and both of them

them were ſo inconſiderable, as not to be known by their Sirnames. Mr. *Verbruggen* was called Mr. *Alexander*, from a Paſſion he had to act that Part, and *Cibber* only known by his Chriſtian Name, *Colley*. I have ſeen ſome old Plays, where their Names are thus printed in the *Dramatis Perſonæ*. I cannot conceive why *Verbruggen* is left out of the Number of his excellent Actors; whether ſome latent Grudge, *alta Mente repoſtum*, has robb'd him of his Immortality in this Work, or to what other Reaſon it is owing, we muſt remain in Ignorance, unleſs our *Apologiſt*, or his *Journeyman of Quality*, ſhould ſometime hence inlighten us in a Supplement to this Work. Theſe excellent Actors in *Lincolns-Inn-Fields* (upon Sir *John Vanbrugh*'s building the Theatre in the *Haymarket* by a Subſcription of thirty People of Quality, at one hundred Pounds each) went over thither, and acted one Year, under a Licence granted to Sir *John* and Mr. *Congreve*; but theſe Gentlemen growing weary of their new and profitleſs Government, it was aſſigned over to Mr. *Owen Swiney*, at a Rent of five Pounds for every acting Day: About this Time, the *Italian Opera* began to creep upon the *Engliſh* Stage, and made its firſt Appearance in the *Haymarket*. But now Mr. *Cibber*, after much Debate and due Conſideration with himſelf, leaves his Adminiſtration and Loyalty to King *Rich*, and revolts to the *Haymarket*.

CHAP. X.

The Apologiſt *a Cobler. Lord* Halifax *ſupports the* Haymarket *by Subſcription.* Rich, *by Rope-dancers. Inſtructions to a* future Tragedy Writer. *Applauds the Act for appointing a Licencer to the Stage.*

THE *Patentee*, his old Maſter (he ſays) about a Year after this, *was compell'd againſt his Inclination*, (a Perſon when he is compell'd to any Thing, it is probable has no Inclination to it) to receive both Companies united into *Drury Lane*; where, it ſeems two of his Plays, *viz.* The *Wife's Reſentment*, and the *Double Gallant*, recover'd their Misfortune of not being heard in the *Haymarket*, from the Wideneſs of that Houſe. The *Double Gallant*, he owns, was made up out of what was tolerable in two or three other Plays. And what Right had you, Sir, to filch what Scenes you thought tolerable, and make a Profit of 'em for yourſelf. Mr. *Burnaby*'s Comedy of the *Sick Ladies Cure*, had been acted with Succeſs, and Mrs. *Centlivre*'s you threw aſide on purpoſe to plunder it. Aye, but you cry, May not a Cobler be uſeful? He may; but let me tell you, a Cobler is a Thief, who works with other Folks Tools

Tools and Leather. Be pleas'd to hear what Mr. *Dryden* ſays of Robberies of this Sort, in his Prologue to *Albumaſer*.

But this our Age ſuch Authors does afford,
As make whole Plays, and yet ſcarce write one Word;
Who, in this Anarchy of Wit, rob all,
And what's their Plunder, their Poſſeſſion call:
Who, like bold Padders, ſcorn by Night to prey,
But rob by Sun-ſhine, in the Face of Day.
Such Men in Poetry may claim ſome Part,
They have the Licence, tho' they want the Art,
And might, where Theft was prais'd, for Laureats ſtand,
Poets, not of the Head, but of the Hand.

Lord *Halifax* ſupported the Players in the *Haymarket* one Winter by a Subſcription. *King Rich*, in the mean Time, play'd againſt 'em: Tumblers, Rope-dancers, &c. which *Colley* would not conſent to, and whiſper'd ſomePeople in the Pit, that it was againſt his Approbation, and without his Conſent: Nay, his Majeſty the Patentee (he ſays) was entring into a Contract, to introduce an *Elephant* on the Stage.---What a glorious Sight would it have been to have beheld our *Laureat* mounted on the Back or *Proboſcis* of this noble Creature, and thundring out from that Roſtrum, Heroic Verſes, or chaunting an Ode of his own compoſing; at leaſt, it might

might have delighted the Ears of the *Groundings*.

Here follows a Diſſertation about the Power of the *Chamberlain*, with Relation to Playhouſes; and our *Author* is of Opinion he has Power, and he has not, and that the Players are under, and are not under his Authority. Now on a ſudden, without Provocation, when no one cou'd conceive any ſuch Thing was in his Head, he jumps forward, and ſays, by the Readers Leave, he *will ſpeak a Word or two to any Author* (of Tragedy) *who has not yet writ one Line of his next Play*.---And his Inſtructions, which he ſolemnly pronounces, are extreme trite, and what every Body knows.---He adviſes him to think well of his chief *Deſign* or *Action*, towards which every Line ought to tend, as to its Centre, *&c.* and recommends him to the Acquaintance of two Gentlemen for his Tutors, with whom he has not the leaſt Intereſt or Acquaintance, *Ariſtotle* and *Horace*; rather than pleaſe himſelf with ſaying fine Things, *mal a propos*, bids him take care of his Scenery, and he will certainly ſucceed, tho' he ſhould talk as much Nonſenſe, as *Banks* does in the *Earl of Eſſex*, &c. If Mr. *Bayes* had iſſued forth his Inſtructions for writing *Comedy*, many People might have attended to them with ſome Expectation and Appetite to have the *Secret from him, of compoſing a good one*; for from being acquainted with his low and obſcure Stile in his other Writings, they might imagine, he had really

really in his Power ſome mechanical Rules to compoſe comic Scenes; ſome natural Recipe, adapted to every Capacity, to make a pleaſant Comedy. But I doubt our young Tragedy Poets will hardly abide by the Judgment of a Perſon, who has given ſuch wretched Specimens of his Power that Way, *Cæſar* in *Ægypt* and *Perolla* and *Iſadora*, are not Examples worthy Imitation. Aye but, ſays he, if you ask me why I did not follow myſelf, the Rules I lay down, why I will tell you: I have found 'em out ſince; I was not then inſtructed, as I am now, that a Fable is neceſſary in a Play. *Yet this*, he confeſſes, *is leading his Reader aſtray, and begs his Pardon; but if he is an idle Fellow, like him, what does it matter what he reads, or* Bayes *writes*. Frank and free! might not this Familiarity with thy Readers Time and Patience, be called, without any Impropriety, *Impertinent Aſſurance*.

He tells us now, how *Dogget*, at the Interceſſion of *Rich*, was taken up by a Warrant from the Lord *Chamberlain*'s Office, and brought up to Town, and taken out of Cuſtody, by applying to *Lord Chief Juſtice Holt*, for an *Habeas Corpus*, the Lord *Chamberlain*, in the Chief Juſtice's Opinion, having no Authority to grant ſuch a Warrant; from whence he infers, how naturally Power, founded only on Cuſtom, is apt to run riot, rejoices that this Power is now legally fix'd in the *Chamberlain*, and affirms *it has been exerciſed with the utmoſt Lenity*.

This

This muſt be true, nobody dares deny it; and yet I have heard, that ſeveral Plays have been prohibited by Power, and but a very few ſuffer'd to appear; and this, without Doubt, happens from the perverſe Humour of the People, who, ſince they are to have no Entertainment, but what they receive under the Correction of Power, are very apt to be mutinous and murmur, and not to approve or reliſh the Fragments of garbled and exciſed Inſipidity, recommended to them as a Feaſt from the Lord *C*---'s Table.

CHAP. XI.

Cato *uſeful.* Sophocles *the Name of a Poet, not a Play. The Patent aſſign'd to Colonel* Brett. *The Hiſtory of the Shirt. Anecdote of the choaking of a ſinging Bird.*

THE Playhouſe in the *Haymarket* is now, it ſeems, recruited from *Drury Lane*, under Mr. *Swiney*'s Direction. Mr. *Bayes* fancies, that a Playhouſe under proper Regulations, may be made uſeful and entertaining; and that the Tragedy of *Cato* was a good and uſeful Poem in the Cauſe of Liberty: And now he tells us an old Tale, that he has heard or read ſomewhere, how the *Athenians*

Athenians laid out 100,000 *l.* on one ſingle Tragedy, and theſe are his Words.-----*It may be ſtill a Queſtion, whether the* Sophocles *inſpired this public Spirit, or this public Spirit inſpired the* Sophocles. Dear Laureat, *Sophocles* was the Name of a Poet, who wrote ſeveral *Greek* Tragedies, not a Tragedy called *Sophocles.*

Sir *Thomas Skipwith*, who had an equal Share with *Rich*, makes a Preſent of it to Colonel *Brett*. This Gentleman is no ſooner named but, *a la Romanski*, he begins the Hiſtory of his Life, and acquaints us, that he was Mr. *Bayes*'s particular, his boſom Friend; and that the Colonel firſt made his Addreſſes to him by complementing a full-bottom'd fair Periwig, which he wore in *The Fool in Faſhion*, in 1695. This tranſported our *Apologiſt* to that Degree, that they agreed to crack a Bottle together after the Play, and *that Bottle* was *(ſays he) the Sire of many a jolly Dozen, that, like orderly Children, whenever they were call'd for came into Company.* Oh the delightful Metaphors! But you muſt pardon him, he aſſures us, *they were both Wits*, and he *bleſſes God*, he has *a quick Reliſh of Delight*; but *if it had not been ſo, the Colonel had Wit enough for two, and* Bayes *Attention enough for four*; *they were excellent Company, and he was a Fly caught in the Honey of his Flattery*; but it was not Flattery neither, *it was only an amicable Adulation.* The Colonel had *much Power* with the *Men*; a Gentleman of Condition told him

ſo; and then with the Ladies! Oh Lud! What he could ſay.---But here he claps his Finger on his Mouth and declares, *that he is no* French *Noveliſt*; yet he could ſay that he knows him to have been *Un Homme a bon Fortune*---Dear Mr. *Tattle*, you are not upon the Stage now. Upon this, we are entertain'd with that moſt elegant Story of his changing Shirts with the Colonel; and this Mr. *Tattle* ſays, he would not have told, *but that it is neceſſary it ſhould be known*.---Fye Fye! how is it neceſſary to be known; give me leave to tell thee, dear Laureat, that in the Opinion of thy moſt courteous Readers, this Circumſtance is thought to be ſilly, indecent and inſignificant; and all Men of Senſe deſpiſe thee for it, and wonder what provoked thy leud Loquacity to this Piece of low Impertinence; was it only to let the World know that thou hadſt a clean Shirt, and thy Friend a ſully'd one?---But this is one of thy precious *Anecdotes*.

In Return to which, you ſhall give me leave to preſent you with another, which you, in the Exactneſs of your Memory, muſt know to be literally true. A certain young Gentleman, who had written a Play, applied to you as Corrector of *Drury-Lane* Houſe, to look over his Piece, and ſee if you thought it fit for Repreſentation. He had not a full-bottom'd Periwig to recommend him, and perhaps his Cloaths might be but plain and worn:---He knock'd at your Door, and gave into your Hand a Roll of

of Paper as he ſtood on the Threſhold, the Door being but half open'd, and deſired you would read it, and give him your Opinion: You turn'd over the firſt Leaf, and having read only two Lines, you returned it, with theſe Words, *Sir, it will not do:* Your Servant, ſaid *the young ſinging Bird*, half choaked; and ſo left your Door. And now immediately, full of this Adventure, you came to *Button's*, ready to ſplit with Laughter. You related this Incident to your Friend Colonel *Brett*; but he, very far from joining in your Joy, or applauding your Conduct, put on a ſevere Brow, and having treated you with very rough Language, let you know, that if the Gentleman had reſented in any Manner this vile Uſage, he wou'd have been juſtified. Sir, ſaid he, do you pretend by reading two Lines, and thoſe in a very ridiculous curſory Manner, to judge the Merit of a whole Play? You are too full of yourſelf, to regard any Perſon elſe; you are ignorant what Miſchief you may have done; you may perhaps have extinguiſh'd, by this imprudent and unmannerly Action, a Genius which might in Time have proved of Uſe and Ornament to his Country. But I ſuppoſe the Gentleman's Cloaths did not pleaſe Sir *Novelty*; and you conceiv'd he had no Underſtanding in his Head, becauſe the Hair that cover'd it, was out of curl: You may remember when he ſaid this, the Colonel turn'd his Back upon you and left the Room; and I believe this juſt Chaſtiſement

ſomewhat affected you, for you made no Reply; you ſquinted indeed as uſual, took a Pinch of Snuff, and ſat down to ruminate on the Affair, under the Pretence of reading a Spectator.

Well, however, he concludes this Chapter, by telling, us, he gave the Colonel ſound Advice, and taught him to manage his old Maſter the Patentee; and that the Colonel was admitted a Sharer with him in the Patent.

CHAP. XII.

About the Opera. Anecdote *of* Goodman. *Perſpicuity of the* Apologiſt's *Style. Two Revolutions more of the Stage.*

HERE we are entertain'd with a tedious and a long Digreſſion about the Opera, which he gives us to know, is an exotick, and therefore cannot thrive here. *Nicolini* was a fine Singer and Actor; the *Tatler* ſays ſo; and *Senoſini* was very like him: Mrs. *Tofts* at this Time was not an *Adept* in Muſick, (what does he mean!) but ſhe was tall and handſome, and had an *exquiſitly ſweet ſilver Tone of Voice.*

But now to the Playhouſe. After the Reunion of the Companies, the Theatre throve under the Management of Colonel *Brett*, which made

made *Bayes*'s old Maſter uneaſy; but Sir *Thomas Skipwith* diſputes his Grant to the Colonel, and he fairly gives it back to him. Immediately after this, follows a very ſtrange out-o'the way Story of *Goodman* the Player, whom King *James* pardon'd for robbing on the Highway; which *Goodman* ſaid, was doing him a particular Honour, (to ſave a Man from hanging is doing him a *particular Honour indeed)* Here our *Apologiſt* preſents us with a ſecond *Anecdote* about a clean Shirt; this ſame *Goodman* and one *Griffin*, fought for the only one they had between 'em, to viſit a Lady in it.--- *Trifling Impertinence!*

As I have in many Places, as I went along with him, neglected to animadvert upon the Perſpicuity of our Laureat's Stile, as I found it every where embarraſs'd and frequently unintelligible; and as it would take up too much Time and Paper to clear up all his cloudy Expreſſions, I beg my courteous Reader will accept of one Inſtance, inſtead of the many I might produce.---His Words are as follows, *The Patentees, by treating their Actors as Enemies, really made 'em ſo; and when the Maſters think not their Actors Hearts as neceſſary as their Hands, and if unexpected Succeſs ſhould make the Profit* (of the Stage) *in any groſs Diſproportion greater than the Wages* (of the Actors) then (ſays he)---*the Wages will always have ſomething worſe than a Murmur at the Head of them, that will not only meaſure the Merit of the Actor*

by

by the Gains of the Proprietor; but will never naturally be quiet, till every Scheme of getting into Property has been tried to make the Servant his own Maſter. I ſtopp'd at this Paragraph, and with ſome Difficulty have tranſlated it thus.----The Actors will murmur, and meaſure their own Value by the Gains of their Maſter the Proprietor, and theſe Actors will never be eaſy till they make themſelves Maſters.

Swiney gets *Wilks*, *Dogget*, *Oldfield* and *Cibber* over to him, to be Sharers in the *Haymarket*. But *Dogget*, who was intirely for the *Salic-Law*, would not admit Mrs. *Oldfield* into the *Regency*; ſo ſhe was content with a Salary of two Hundred Pounds a Year, and a Benefit clear. The Patentee, about this Time, is ſilenced by the Lord *Chamberlain*, and ſome other of the Players walk off to the *Haymarket*. The Government of a Theatre (ſays our *Bayes)* is very like the Government of a Nation, and the Manager of a Theatre (we have leave to laugh here) very like a Stateſman. Now he goes off again to the Opera, and *complains that its bridal Beauty was grown familiar to our Taſte, and Satiety began to make Excuſes for Want of Appetite; for the beſt Voices, like the fineſt Flowers, bloom not but for a Seaſon.* Here behold a whole Bundle of Poſies, a Noſegay in each Hand. Even *Faranelli at laſt ſung to empty Benches.* Yet when he could no longer pleaſe here, his Voice charm'd a *Monarch* (a Madman he might ſay)

ſay) and prevented him from reſigning his Crown a ſecond Time: But now, (for on a Sudden he does not like theſe Operas,) theſe coſtly Canary Birds cou'd not agree, and went into Parties, and *Fauſtina* and *Cuzzoni* (like *Cæſar* and *Pompey)* o' my Word a moſt curious Simile, divided the Commonwealth of Muſick.

Now let us return to Buſineſs once more, methinks the Revolutions of the Stage come faſt about. A new Licence is granted to one *William Collier*, Eſq; who was great, in Parties of Pleaſure, with ſome People then in Power. Now this Perſon, who was a Lawyer, cunningly got a Leaſe of *Drury Lane* Houſe from the Renters, by contracting to give them more Rent than the old Patentee; by Virtue of which, he made a forcible Entry, and turn'd him out. At this Time *Rich*'s Actors all revolted to *Collier*, at the Head of them was *Booth*. About this Time, a Comedy to called *The Fair Quaker of Deal*, was acted with Succeſs, and drew the Vulgar after it; and *Miſs Santloe*, who play'd the Part of the *Fair Quaker*, was very like *The Maid of Orleans*. With this Flower he concludes his 12th Chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Another Stage Revolution. *The* Apologiſt *tells us who builds* Weſtminſter Bridge. *Compares Mr.* Addiſon *to a* Wren. Wilks's *Extravagance.* Booth *inferior in Merit to* Colley. *He is like the elder* Brutus.

HE informs us in the Beginning of this Chapter, *that the frequent Convulſions of the Stage occaſion'd its Settlement*; that his old Maſter, when turn'd out by *Collier*, was extremely delighted, becauſe it gave him Leiſure to build a Playhouſe in *Lincolns-Inn-Fields*. But the late Treaty between *Collier*, *Wilks*, *Dogget* and *Cibber* (for the new Licence was in all their Names) obliged *Wilks*, &c. to pay to *Collier* 700 *l. per Annum*; and beſides this, the Players were to faſt every *Wedueſday*, (that is, the Plays were to be ſilent every *Wedneſday*, to give the *Opera* a fairer Chance for a full Houſe.) But this did them no Harm, ſays *Colley*, for they had a better Stomach, and a better Dinner on *Thurſday*.---What delightful Stuff is this, to entertain a Town? Indeed, *Laureat*, notwithſtanding what thou may'ſt dream of the Immortality of this Work of thine, and beſtowing the ſame on thy Favourites by recording

cording them here; thou mayſt, old as thou art, live too ſee thy precious Labours become the vile Wrappers of Paſtry-Grocers and Chandlery Wares.

———*vendentem Thus & Odores*
Et Piper, & quicquid Chartis amicitur ineptis.

Now, I don't know why, but the Manner of paſſing Laws does not pleaſe him; Debts are not recoverable with ſo much Eaſe, as he cou'd wiſh; he tells us, our *Legiſlators* when they prepare Bills, *are apt to hang Exceptions on particular Clauſes:* And after much of this embarraſs'd dark Stuff, he gives us a moſt pleaſing *Anecdote*, concerning the building the new Bridge at *Weſtminſter*. He ſays, and it is a ſtrange Piece of News indeed, that there is a *certain Commiſſioner*, what Commiſſioner we know not, *who is now building a Bridge at* Weſtminſter, *whoſe diſtinguiſh'd Impatience has broke through thoſe vain Artifices and falſe and frivolous Objections that delay'd it*, which he calls, *the future Monument of his public Spirit*. I profeſs, I always took it, that this Bridge, was to be built at the public Expence; and I have heard Folk ſay, there have been ſeveral State Lotteries granted to defray the Charge of it. But what is all this to your Story of the Stage? I don't care a Half-penny, *ſays Colley*, I had a Mind to immortaliſe this *Commiſſioner*, and I have done it; for he ſays, *what he has obſerved ſhall remain a memorable Truth to his Honour.*

He goes on, under this new Licence granted to *Collier*, *Wilks*, &c. They were obliged to behave well, for it was but during Pleaſure. Then if they had acted under a Patent, they might here behav'd otherwiſe; 'tis true, they did ſo when they had a Patent; they immediately ſold it.

He complains that *Wilks*, who he confeſſes had a ſtronger Paſſion for Glory than Lucre, was apt to be laviſh in his Expences, in dreſſing himſelf and his Followers (the Actors) but it *never troubled him* (till now) he always ſmiled at it. *Dogget* could not bear it. *Colley* uſed to whiſper *Wilks*, he might dreſs himſelf, but why ſhould he be ſo careful of others? *Wilks* reply'd, *I did it for that Reaſon, to ſhew others I love to take Care of them as well as myſelf.* *Wilks*'s Anſwer was right. Everybody knows that other Parts, beſides the principal ones, ought to be properly, and if their Characters require it, ſplendidly dreſs'd, which neither the Conſtitutions of *Dogget* or *Cibber* cou'd by any means endure; both of them being ſtrongly inclined to what they call the penurious or miſerable. But if *Wilks* was, as he pretends, unmanageable, eaſily hurt by Oppoſition, and inſupportable; let us enquire how he came to appear to him this reſtiff Animal. Did he not daily find himſelf yoaked and cramped in a laborious Management, with two lazy and negligent Things; who, tho' very fond of the Profit, grudg'd the Expence, and cared but little

little for the Labour, and wou'd have the Wheel turn round, without Wind or Water. This, I am well aſſured was the very Caſe. *Wilks*, an honeſt and induſtrious Man, was always at the labouring Oar; *Cibber* immers'd in Pleaſures, and *Dogget* ever buſied in Stock-jobbing; one ſporting a merry Main in the Court of Requeſts, the other gaming in Exchange Alley.

Thus one may eaſily conceive the Foundation of *Colley*'s Malice to *Wilks*. His Crime was Merit, which *Colley* reſolved to puniſh him for in his Grave; for this is his Manner to thoſe who have the Misfortune to diſoblige him. To give a very high Inſtance of this, towards the late moſt ingenious Mr. *Addiſon*. Our Laureat, ſome Years ago, preſented the Public with a Thing he called a Play, ſomething in Imitation of the *Cid* of *Corneille*, I cannot call it a Tranſlation into *Engliſh*, for it is not *Engliſh*, 'tis a Sort of *Lingua Cibberiana*, which, as they ſay the *Lingua Franca* is a commercial, is a Sort of Theatrical Language, peculiar to himſelf and the Stage: This he intituled, *The Heroic Daughter*, and dedicated it to Sir *Richard Steele*, after the Death of Mr. *Addiſon*; in which Dedication, he took it into his ſtrange Head, to compare Mr. *Addiſon* to a *Wren*, and Sir *Richard* to an *Eagle*, in theſe Lines, from Mr. *Dryden*'s *All for Love*.

Fool that I was, upon my EAGLES *Wings*
I bore this WREN, *till he had ſoar'd above me.*

This gave great and juſt Offence: What provok'd our *Laureat* to make this ſilly Alluſion, is not known. Mr. *Addiſon*, it is plain, was not in his Favour. This occaſioned the following Epigram in one of our public Papers.

Thus Colley Cibber *to his Partner* Steele,
See here, Sir Knight, how I've outdone Corneille;
See here, how I, my Patron to inveigle,
Make Addiſon *a* Wren, *and you an* Eagle.
Safe to the ſilent Shades, we bid Defiance;
For living Dogs are better than dead Lions.

He aſſures the Public, that the Merit of Mr. *Booth* was inferior to the Merit of him and his Brother Menagers; and that, he ſays, kept him ſo long out of a Share in the Patent. This my Friend knows well, is ſaying, *the Thing that is not.* It was not *Booth*'s inferior Merit; that all the World knows; but it was the Intereſt of the other Menagers to keep him out of the Menagement, which they wiſely did, as long as it was in their Power.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

A Nobleman is to write a Supplement to the Apologiſt's Book. *The* Achilles *and* Ulyſſes *of the Theatre, who.* Booth *made a Menager,* Dogget *quits.* Anecdote *relating to him.* Apologiſt *abuſes* Wilks, *and ſays his Conſcience pricks him.*

THEIR Paſſions and their Intereſts draw the Menagers ſeveral Ways; but yet, ſays Maſter *Apologiſt*, you ſhall not draw me in *to open the Characters of my Brother Actors in private Life*; no, no, *his laughing Friends muſt excuſe him there:* Anecdotes *of this Sort he leaves to the Amuſement of a* NOBLE PERSON, *who does him the flattering Honour to promiſe to publiſh them, by Way of Supplement to his Work.* I really read this Paragraph more than once, before I could be perſuaded that my Eyes told Truth. My *dear Laureat*, this is an *Anecdote*, the rareſt thou haſt yet produced.---What; doſt thou keep *a Nobleman in Petto*, to publiſh Scandal, by Way of Supplement to thy Book? And which thou dareſt not do thyſelf? Thou doſt not ſurely hope to make us believe, that any noble Perſon can be reduced ſo low, to become thy Scavenger;

Scavenger; and really one would think no antiquated *Hiſtrio* can have an Underſtanding ſo worn and ſo weak, to publiſh this with any Deſign to gain Honour or Credit.

About this Time, he informs us, two *uncelebrated* Actors came from *Dublin (Elrington* and *Griffith* he means;) *Wilks*, whoſe Friends they were, introduced them, and they had a *Benefit Play*. This he complains of as a Hardſhip put upon them by *Wilks*. *Elrington*, was an Actor of ſome Merit, the other not conſiderable; but, if I remember right, they both play'd the whole Seaſon, and did them ſome Service. The long ſilly Tale that follows, of the *Laureat*'s paying into the Office ten Pounds deficient in the Charges on their *Benefit*, muſt be referr'd to any one, who knows this Gentleman's Generoſity, or ever heard of it; and I think, we may look upon it as Apochryphal. *Dogget*, he ſays, could not bear this, and grew quite as untractable as *Wilks*. The only one of the *Triumvirate* now in his Wits, was *Cibber*, which he applied to the Purpoſe, and quieted theſe Convulſions in the *Theatrical Republic*. But, dear Sir, give me your Leave to recall to your Memory an Affair that, about this Time, ruffled you with Relation to this *(uncelebrated)* Actor, *Elrington*. This young Fellow was fired with the Ambition of riſing into a *Theatrical Hero*, and made great Intereſt with you and your Brethren, to play the Part of *Toriſmond*, in the *Spaniſh Fryer*, but was flatly

ly denied; upon which, he applied higher, and got ſome People of Condition, to requeſt this Favour of you for the poor Man, half out of his Wits to ſhew himſelf in this Character; but to this Petition likewiſe, there was given an ungrateful Negative. When now there was a warm Application made, in this moſt important Buſineſs, to a Nobleman at that Time in the Adminiſtration, who ſent for your Honour, and deſired you wou'd give him your Reaſon for your Refuſal, you remember your Reply was to this Effect: *My Lord, it is not with us as with you; your Lordſhip is ſenſible there is no Difficulty in filling Places at C----. You cannot be at a Loſs for Perſons to act their Parts there; but I aſſure you, it is quite otherwiſe in our Theatrical World; if we ſhould inveſt People with Characters, who are unqualified to ſupport them, we ſhould be undone.* This ſquab Anſwer went off at this Time with a Laugh, and a Reprimand; but this, and ſome other inadvertent Inſolence, had like, ſome Time after, to have deprived you of the Uſe of your Patent. If, as he informs us, *Wilks* was the *Achilles*, ſurely *Cibber*, we have his own Word for it, was the *Ulyſſes* of the Theatre; tho' I cannot readily agree with our *Ulyſſes*, how it became ſo abſolutely neceſſary to Truth or Juſtice, to publiſh theſe Tranſactions; and I am apt to believe, his Readers muſt be as weak, as he ſeems to be unforgiving, if they agree with him, that it is at all neceſſary to this his ſtrange Hiſtory. But

ſhall

ſhall I ſay how it became neceſſary? It became ſo, I fear, to give Vent to a long ſwoln latent Spleen, and indulge the Vengeance of a vitious mean Heart.

Booth ſolicits his Admiſſion to the Management, and ſucceeds. His Name is inſerted in the new Licence. *Dogget* refuſes to admit him; the old *Triumvirate* debate it. *Ulyſſes* cannot prevail on *Dogget*, and he quits his Share; he abdicates and returns no more: And yet notwithſtanding this, we are told by our laurel'd Hiſtorian, that this *Dogget* was a ſenſible Man, and underſtood Buſineſs well. How well he underſtood Buſineſs, this raſh Reſignation ſhews; how well he underſtood his Intereſt, the following Story will inſtruct us, which many People can vouch for the Truth of.

Some Time before *Dogget abdicated his Poſt in the Government of the Stage* (as our wiſe Author has it) there was left in his Hand 200 *l.* by his Brethren *Wilks* and *Cibber*, as a Depoſit to defray any extraordinary incidental Charges; and it was agreed among them, that this Sum, nor any Part of it, ſhould be diſpoſed without the general Conſent, without the joint Agreement of theſe three *Menagers*. Now, upon *Dogget*'s Separation, this Sum remain'd intire in his Hands; but, when upon this Occaſion, *Wilks* and *Cibber* came to withdraw their Share of the 200 *l.* the *Comedian* twiſted his ridiculous Muſcles, ſhook his Head, ſnuffed, and after ſome Pauſe, told them very gravely, That he

could not deliver any Part of the Money; for that they knew very well, it was left in his Hands, not to be parted with, unleſs they *all three* conſented: Now, ſays he, I am *one* of the *three*, and *I do not conſent to part with this Money*, or with any Part of it. They ſtared, and deſired he wou'd repeat his Words; for they thought, from the Particularity of his Anſwer, that they miſunderſtood him: And when they found he was in earneſt, in this ſubtile and equitable Diſtinction, in his own Favour, they told him, his Reaſoning was ſo ridiculous, it hardly deſerved an Anſwer; but that, if he thought it proper to expoſe himſelf, by conſulting his Friends upon it, they wou'd wait a Day or two for his Reſolution: And it was ſome Time, before he cou'd perſuade himſelf, or be perſuaded to pay them; and they were apprehenſive they ſhould be obliged to deſire the Equity of the Lord *Chancellor* to interpoſe on this ſilly Occaſion.

But, ſays our Author, *Dogget* did not leave the Stage, becauſe *Booth* was admitted a Menager; but it was the painful Behaviour of *Wilks* towards him, that made a Man *of his Underſtanding* quit the Stage. What his Underſtanding was, we have ſeen in the foregoing Story. The naturally cloſe and ſullen Complexions of *Dogget* and *Cibber*, quite oppoſite to *Wilks*'s open and generous Mind, muſt now and then claſh, and occaſion Convulſions in their Affairs;

but, maugre all Mr. *Bayes* can ſay, it is and was the Opinion of moſt People, both within and without the Doors of the Theatre, that *Wilks* was the Corner-Stone that ſupported it. The Reaſons, *Colley*, which you beſtow upon us, why you never reſented the Rage of your *Achilles*, are very well, and well known to all Men of Senſe; but is there not another Reaſon, why you deferr'd your Puniſhment? Is it not ſafer, is it not better, to out-live the Perſons, who affront thee; and revenge thyſelf, when they are in the Grave; when thou may'ſt be thy own Witneſs, Judge and Executioner? But thy Way was, when this *iracundus acer* was alive, to ſquint, take a Pinch, and hum a Tune, like the *Welſh* Parſon, in the *Merry Wives of Windſor*, when he was going to Battle, and conceal thy Fears under a Song. But hold,--- Let us go no farther, for now (in Page 407.) he ſays, if I underſtand him right, his Conſcience pricks him, about what he has ſaid of *Wilks:* His Words are,---*I confeſs myſelf a little touch'd in Conſcience, at what I have juſt now obſerved to the Diſadvantage of my other Brother Menager:* And ſo he concludes this Chapter, with telling us, *that take him for all in all*, &c.

Thou Convictor of thyſelf, wherefore then haſt thou thus libell'd him throughout thy ſilly Memoirs? Ungrateful and unjuſt! Does this Publication of the Rancour of thy Heart, and begging

begging Pardon for it, excuſe it? Do thy frequent impertinent Digreſſions, and as frequent Declarations that they are ſuch, acquit thee of being impertinent and tedious? Doſt thou conceive that thy Fuſtian, thy Obſcurity, thy falſe *Engliſh*, and the ridiculous Flowers of thy Rhetoric, adorn thee?——You do, I believe, and you only think ſo. Could you have given us a plain, faithful, and orderly Account of the Revolutions of the Stage, and the Characters of the Actors, without Partiality, and without intermixing your particular Paſſions and Prejudices, your Book might have been entertaining, and perhaps in ſome ſmall Degree, uſeful. But thy Partiality is ſo notorious, with Relation to *Wilks*, that every one ſees you never praiſe him, but to rail at him; and only oil your Hone, to whet your Razor.

CHAP. XV.

Sir Richard Steele *gets a Licence. 'Tis turn'd into a Patent.* Apologiſt drubs *Wilks* again. Lincolns-Inn-Fields *Playhouſe opens. Introduction of Pantomimes by* Drury Lane *Company.* Tartuffe, *or the* Nonjuror, *acted.*

QUEEN *Anne* dies, and Plays are ſilenced. The Players thought Sir *Richard Steele* a proper Perſon to ſupply *Collier*'s Place, and to receive his Penſion. In this Place, Mr. *Bayes*, you ſeem to take ſomething more upon you, than you ought; for you cannot but remember, you were indebted to Sir *Richard*, for conſenting to have your's, and your Brethren's Names inſerted after his in the new Licence. And when you ſay, in your Opinion, nobody had better Pretenſions than Sir *Richard*, you ſhould ſay, the Court thought ſo. However, he took your kind Intentions well, and loved you (as you tell us) *as if you were his own Children.* Now *Rich* gets leave to act at his own new Houſe in *Lincolns-Inn-Fields*, by the Intereſt of Mr. *Craiggs junior*; and when he open'd, many of the younger Actors in *Drury Lane* deſerted him. The Reaſon of their Deſertion (he informs us) was, they could not bear

bear the ſhocking Temper of *Wilks:* This, Mr *Bayes*, we are obliged to place to your Account, as a Miſtake; for whatever ſome of theſe Actors have told you, as perhaps they might, to curry Favour with you, ſeveral of them now living are ready to avouch, that this was not the Occaſion of their leaving *Drury Lane*; but the Occaſion was, Sir, (which 'tis natural to believe) their Deſire to ſhine in new or in better Parts, their Ambition to be the *Wilks*, *Cibber* and *Booth* of this new Company, and their Hopes of and Agreement for advanced Salaries.---Prithee, ſuffer thy poor Brother to ſleep in his Grave in Peace----but,----*difficili Bile tumet Jecur.*

About this Time, the public Papers, and particularly *Miſt's Journal*, took upon them to cenſure the Menagement (of *the Triumvirate)* with the ſame Freedom, as if they had been *Miniſters of State*; but the *Laureat* wou'd not anſwer them, becauſe he would not give them an Opportunity to *dine upon a Reply*. This is a little unchriſtian, 'tis ſomewhat uncharitable, to ſtarve the poor Creatures, who oppoſed you, only to get a little Bread by the Oppoſition.

Lincolns-Inn-Fields hurt *Drury Lane*; but, by Sir *Richard Steele*'s Intereſt, they got their Licence turn'd into a Patent. This (ſays *Bayes*) we knew wou'd free us from an *abject ſole Dependence on a Lord Chamberlain.* And yet in the Beginning of this ſame Hiſtory, as he ſtiles it, he extols mightily the late Act, that has forever

forever thrown all Plays and Players under a low, abject and ſole Dependence on a Lord *Chamberlain*.---Inconſiſtent!

He now confeſſes, (Page 422.) that they were the firſt Publiſhers of Pantomime Entertainments, and this was the Fable of *Mars* and *Venus*; and in his Opinion, the general Taſte for theſe Things will always prevail, unleſs Authority ſhould interpoſe; or, in his own Words, *the Few will never be a match for the Many*. This is true; but had the People never taſted theſe Pantomime Delicacies, they could never have longed; it was therefore your Wiſdom, and the Wiſdom of your Brother Menagers, that brought theſe monſtrous Medleys upon the Stage---But, you ſay, if you are asked why you came into theſe Entertainments, you confeſs ingeniouſly your Virtue could not oppoſe your Intereſt, and you affirm, that Henry *the Fourth of* France, *and you were very like; for he had not a better Excuſe for changing his Religion: How far the Hero and the Comedian were wrong, let the Clergy and the Criticks decide (ſay you)*---Hear, oh ye Criticks, hearken, oh ye Clergymen, and ſit in Conſiſtory and Council on this weighty Queſtion---But after all, the Laureat allows his Vanity ſupplies him with many Things; he is proud of being proud, exactly as our poor Lunaticks rave in their Straw. I ſhould ſeriouſly adviſe a young Gentleman, a near Relation of the Laureat's (if his Modeſty and filial Tenderneſs does not interpoſe) to petition

tition the Court of *Chancery* for a Commiſſion, and produce this Paragraph in Evidence.---Aye, but this Rhapſody is thrown in only as a Dance between the Acts, and to pleaſe thoſe Readers who are not your *dry Matter of Fact-Men*; ſo that this ſame Hiſtory is now turned into a down-right Stage Play; it is an odd one, at once dull and ridiculous. But he gets into the Road again, and elegantly ſays, they uſed theſe *Pantomimes as Crutches, only to their weak Plays: Things that could not hobble on without them.* You are quite out here, *Laury*, they were made uſe of as Crutches to your Idleneſs, to employ your Underlings, and excuſe yourſelves from Labour, and to give you Time to indulge in your quality Diverſions.

And now the *Nonjuror* comes on the Stage; and he lets us know, he was very much perſecuted by the *Jacobits* for this Piece, and ſaid to be dead by that poor Dog *Miſt:* But he confuted him, by coming abroad, and acting the Chaplain that Night in the *Orphan.* But you ſhould have told us, (ſince you have ſaid how much you have ſuffered, by making your *Tartuffe* a nonjuring Parſon) how you were rewarded, as well as puniſh'd. His late Majeſty gave you for the Dedication 100 *l.*---About this Time, ſome Writer, one of *Miſt*'s Scriblers I ſuppoſe, publiſh'd a Criticiſm on this Tranſlation, to which he prefix'd this Motto.----

His Crime, was for being a Felon in Verſe,
And preſenting his Theft to the King;
Tho' the firſt was a Crime, not uncommon or ſcarce,
Yet the laſt was an impudent Thing.

CHAP. XVI.

Apologiſt *commences Barriſter. Pleads againſt two Lord Chancellors in* futuro. *Actreſſes frail Flowers. Drubs* Robin *again. The Manner of introducing a new Play. The* Apologiſt *ſells his Share in the Patent. The true Reaſon for it. Concluſion.*

I Now come to the ſixteenth and (thank Heaven) the laſt Chapter of this long, heavy, dull, pert, injudicious laughing Hiſtory; the Work of a moſt undaunted Scribler, who has, for almoſt fifty Pages, ſtood buff to all Manner of Criticiſm and Correction; who conſtantly offends, and as conſtantly avows, and begs Pardon for his Offences: Who patronizes, and laughs with us at his own Aſſurance, Blunders, Errors, *&c.* Who rejoices, and applauds himſelf in the Jocundity of his laughing Spirits.----But enough of this, ſince we have followed

lowed him thus far, let us wait on him to his Journey's End. As we go on, I find he continues ſtill in the ſame Strain; he writes and will write (he aſſures us) to pleaſe himſelf, tho' few or none have Patience to read; but *ſome Readers may wake, while others ſleep*; and *he had rather find his Readers languid than lively.*----*Sibi conſtat*---One Word more with you, Mr. *Bayes*, you frequently affirm, *you take great Delight in your Vanity*; you don't deliver this as one of your *Anecdotes?* But what is quite new, you ſay, if we *don't like you, you think we cannot read Horace, Montaign* and Sir *William Temple* with *Pleaſure*. Really, honour'd *Laureat*, they who read *Horace, Montaign* and Sir *William Temple* with Pleaſure, I muſt take the Liberty to ſay, cannot read thee with Pleaſure.---What a *vage, hoity toity, jaunty, undaunted, meritricial Genius* is this?---And now he is off again, *and he hopes to have Readers of no more Judgment, than ſome of his* quondam *Auditors.*

The Scene opens. Enter *Bayes* in a *Barriſter's Gown.* He trips in a Moment from the Stage to the Bar; for you are to know, theſe ſame *Menagers*, to ſhew their Wiſdom and Gratitude, quarrel with their beſt Friend Sir *Richard Steele*, who had gain'd them their Licence, turn'd their Licence into a Patent, wrote for them, talk'd for them, *&c.* But behold their Orator *Colley*, now with Notes in his Hand, pleading againſt this very Sir *Richard*, before the late Sir *Joſeph Jekyll*, againſt two Council,

afterwards ſucceſſively Lord *Chancellors*; yet when it came to the critical Moment, Dread and Apprehenſion ſeiz'd him: He was abaſhed, (believe him if you can) nay, he was ſo terrified, that he wept ſorely: For ſomething like that he means by theſe Words: *An involuntary and unaffected Proof of his Confuſion, fell from his Eyes.*---What Fuſtian!----Well, he pleads his Cauſe, and the Iſſue was, both Parties paid their own Coſts, and they thought it their Intereſt, that this ſhould be the laſt of their Law-Suits.

He again, which he has repeated fifty Times, asks pardon of his gentle Reader for being inſupportably tedious and impertinent; yet all this, he declares, *proceeds either from the Weakneſs of his Judgment, or the Strength of his Vanity.* Very likely:--- The Vanity of the Heart proceeds frequently from the Weakneſs of the Head.

He gives a ſhort Hiſtory of the Plays at *Hampton Court*; where he obſerves, that the *Theatre* ſunk with the *Decadence* of Monarchy, and roſe again at the Reſtoration: And that the witty *Duke of* Buckingham, *was an illuſtrious Pretender to Poetry.* In this Place, he is ſomewhat out o' Temper with Biſhop *B*---for ſaying, Nel Guin *was the indiſcreeteſt and wildeſt Creature that ever was in Court*; and *preferring the Penitence of Mrs.* Roberts, *a Parſon's Daughter, to her Penitence.*---I really think that in this Way of Tatling, a Pratler like our *Bayes* might, (if every Thing in any Manner relative to the

Stage is to be particularly ſpecified) tho' his Years ſhou'd exceed thoſe of *Methuſelah*, be immortal himſelf, before he could finiſh his Work.---But why may not I (ſays he) be as fond of a Siſter Player, as this Biſhop was of a Parſon's Daughter.---*Something more than vain!* He informs us, that *Decency was obſerved in the Audiences at Court; that they did not clap and hiſs there; for if they had, they wou'd have been ſtared at*; and then he aſſures us, they were not Strollers, *itinerant Adventurers*; that the *King* was particularly pleaſed with *Shakeſpear*'s *Henry* VIII, and that famous Speech where the ſpiritual Miniſter (as our Laureat here very well remarks) filches from his Maſter the Grace and Merit of a good Action; and dreſſes himſelf up in it: This rais'd the King into *ſomething more than a Smile* (a Laugh he means).

With ſome ſhew of Modeſty he now confeſſes, *he is picking up the remaining Scraps of Theatrical Hiſtory*; for he thinks *he may find in the whole World, as idle Souls to read, as he was to write.---Hardly!*

We have waited ſome Time for an *Anecdote*, when lo! he preſents us with a *political one*: He tells us, he delights to compare the *Theatrical* to the *Political* World; and that from the Reign of King *Charles* II, to this Day, the People have clamoured againſt every *Miniſter*, and yet ſome of theſe *Miniſters* had been wiſer and honeſter than others.---Right! here you walk on ſure Ground: This is a moſt un-

deniable Truth. All Men are not equally wiſe or wicked. And now, ſays he, if *this be true, as true he believes it is*, this is extremely like the Management of the Stage.---Why?---Becauſe *they*, the Players, *cannot pleaſe every Body*:--The Similitude here being ſomewhat cloudy, we muſt be content to gueſs his Meaning.---But it clears up immediately: *Their Merit as Actors, was not equal to the Merit of their Predeceſſors.* So that as Miniſters were not all bad alike, Players were not all good alike.---But this Misfortune happens, he ſays, *becauſe there is no Garden, where accompliſh'd Actors grow; and they are only to be pick'd up like pebble Stones, by chance, to put into the Lids of Snuff-boxes*; And yet there have been fewer *good Women* than *Men Actors*.---Why ſo? *Becauſe the frail Fair-ones, before they came to Maturity, have been feloniouſly ſtole from the Tree.*---Excellent Soul! metaphorical Trees as well as Flowers! Nothing ſo delighting as thy Stile ſo abounding in Fragrancies.---You diſdain the plain Ground. You are right.

For he, who ſervilely creeps after Senſe
Is ſafe, but ne'er can reach an Excellence.

And yet the Stage-Nymphs are as chaſte as Nuns; and with more Merit, becauſe not ſhut up. But alas! the Stage is but the Show-Glaſs to a Toyſhop; and the Baubles there, meaning

meaning the Ladies, now and then find Purchaſers.

After this, he confeſſes, young Actors have not been encouraged as they ought to have been; but he loves Truth. He complains that *Wilks* gave away Parts with a high Hand; and particularly, the Part of *Pierre* in *Venice preſerv'd*, to his Favourite *Old Mills*. *Booth*, he ſays, wou'd have play'd it better. But he forgot that *Booth* play'd *Jaffier*; yet I think *Mills* play'd this Part well; indeed much better than any other Part I ever ſaw him do.

He himſelf conceives now, (p. 462) that he is a little preſumptuous and pragmatical; but he is very ſure, *every ſenſible Reader will rather laugh than look grave at the Pomp of his Paralels.* We agree, every Body muſt laugh; but how unaccountable is it to ſee a Perſon take a Pride and Pleaſure, in the Evening of Life, in acting the *Jack-pudding* off the Stage.

Now have at you, *Bob Wilks*, once again. Firſt, he allows him to have great Induſtry and Application, and then ſays, theſe Qualities were uſeleſs and prejudicial to their Commonwealth. How ſo? Why truly, *It ſhock'd the honeſt Ambition of others*:--- Colley, *thou reaſon'ſt ill*: Why ſhou'd not the Induſtry and Ability of *Wilks* have rais'd their Emulation? Why ſhould they not, by his Example, have been induſtrious? No, their Ambition was ſhocked, and they wou'd be nothing, ſince they cou'd not be equal to him. But you, Sir, to avoid diſagreeable

Diſputes

Diſputes with this ſame *Drawcanſir Wilks*, was forced to comply with him. But, as we have ſaid---your Idleneſs, your Neglect of your Buſineſs, your tyrannical Behaviour to your Inferiors, were the Occaſions of his rebuking you. I have been aſſured, no Perſon who ever had Power on the Stage, was ever ſo univerſally odious to the Actors as yourſelf; and theſe were the Reaſons which might ſometimes provoke *Wilks* to treat you with the ſame Aſperity you uſed to others.

Now, Sir, as to your being forced by *Wilks* to receive the *Water-gruel Work* (a new and polite Phraſe) *of ſome inſipid Author*, I imagine we may once more accuſe you of *Saying the Thing that is not*. And this will appear by giving the Public an Account of the Manner of introducing a new Play on the Stage during the Government of theſe three Theatrical Adminiſtrators; which take as follows:

The Author of a new Piece was inſtructed to pay his Complements ſeverally to the Menagers, who, with much Unwillingneſs, were prevail'd upon to appoint ſome leiſure Day for the Reading of it, when they were all three to be preſent: Yet this was a Favour not eaſily to be obtain'd; for we are to know, when an Author had got thus far, he had made a conſiderable Progreſs, not one in Twenty being ever able to gain this Point; and never, I believe, during their Proſperity, without the Recommendation of Intereſt or Power. Well, the Day being

being come for reading, the *Corrector*, in his *Judicial Capacity*, and the other two being preſent; that is, *The Court ſitting*, *Chancellor Cibber* (for the other two, like M---rs in *Chancery* ſat only for Form ſake, and did not preſume to judge) nodded to the Author to open his Manuſcript. The Author begins to read, in which if he failed to pleaſe the *Corrector*, he wou'd condeſcend ſometimes to read it for him: When, if the Play ſtrook him very warmly, as it wou'd, if he found any Thing new in it, in which he conceived he cou'd particularly ſhine as an Actor, he would lay down his Pipe, (for the *Chancellor* always ſmoaked when he made a Decree) and cry, *By G---d there is ſomething in this: I do not know but it may do; but I will play ſuch a Part.* Well, when the Reading was finiſhed, he made his proper Corrections, and ſometimes without any Propriety; nay, frequently he very much and very haſtily maimed what he pretended to mend: But to all this the Author muſt ſubmit, or he wou'd find his Work poſtponed to another Seaſon, or perhaps *ſine Die*. But it is moſt certain *Wilks* never pretended to interpoſe here, but left the whole to the *Corrector*, whoſe peculiar Province it was, and who, as a ſucceſsful Writer for the Stage, muſt be ſuppos'd to know more of this Part of the Buſineſs than the other two.

He now draws to a Concluſion, and complains of the diſagreeable Diſtreſſes they ſuffered from

from the Perſecution of bad Authors; he might ſay very juſtly from good and bad Authors: For both of them were equally terrible to theſe Actors. *Booth* has, with great Frankneſs, often publickly declared at *Button*'s, that they did not deſign or deſire to act any new Play, whether it was good or bad; and he gave the true and natural Reaſon for it, which was, that their Houſe was always full, and therefore they muſt looſe whenever the Profits of a third or ſixth Night were on this Occaſion deducted. He did not chuſe to reflect, he did not conſider, that in Time the Town muſt be ſurfeited with the continual Repetition of old Plays; nor had he the Honour or Gratitude or Ingenuity to own, that if there never had been new Plays, there never cou'd have been old ones. Theſe were the true Reaſons, *Colley*, the worldly Conſiderations which drove theſe *ingenious Indigents*, as you call 'em, from the Stage. But let me ſay, *The moſt ingenious indigent* I know, is thyſelf; *ingenious indeed*, who from ſuch a Pile of indigeſted incoherent Ideas huddled together by the *Miſnomer* of a Hiſtory, could raiſe a Contribution on the Town (if Fame ſays true) of Fifteen hundred Pounds.

As to the Occaſion of your parting with your Share of the Patent, I cannot think you give us the true Reaſon; for I have been very well inform'd, it was the Intention, not only of you, but of your Brother Menagers, as ſoon as you could get the great Seal to your Patent, (which

ſtuck

ſtuck for ſome Time, the then Lord *Chancellor* not being ſatisfied in the Legality of the Grant) to diſpoſe it to the beſt Bidder. This was at firſt kept as a Secret among you; but as ſoon as the Grant was compleated, you ſold to the firſt who wou'd come up to your Price. *Booth* did the ſame; and the Death of *Wilks* left it to his Executrix to make the moſt of her Share too: And thus the Grace and Favour of the *Crown*, which granted *Letters Patent* of this kind to you, who were known to be long and well qualify'd for the Truſt, were obtained only as a Job to make Money of; or, as it has been ſuſpected, after you had aſſign'd your Patent, to have made as much as Actors under it, as when you were *Patentees*; well knowing the Grant wou'd not have been of much Value to any while you were living, without your Aſſiſtance as Actors, and when the Profits of it were to ariſe only from the Labours of the Under-actors.

THE HISTORY OF THE LIFE, MANNERS and WRITINGS OF ÆSOPUS, *the Tragedian.*

From a Fragment of a *Greek* Manuſcript found at *Rome* in the ſixth Century, and now preſerv'd in the Library of the Vatican; interſpers'd with Obſervations of the Tranſlator.

CHAP. I.

Of Æſopus's *Birth and Education. Of his Matriculation into the College of Players, and the Management of his younger Years.*

ÆSOPUS was born in *Corinth*, a rich City of *Achaia*, in a little Street or Alley, called the Καλκεῖου or *Braſs Pot*; his Father was a Stone-cutter, or rather let us ſay, a Statuary, ſince he was a good Workman,

man, and a *bon Companion*, and ſpent almoſt all he gain'd by his Art: His Mother, on the contrary, was a very carking, ſparing, Houſewifely Woman; ſo that *Æſopus* has often been heard to ſay, he partook equally of the Profuſion of his Father, and the Sparingneſs of his Mother. The Family afterwards removed to *Rome*, with young *Æſopus*, during the Conſulſhip of *Marcus Tullius Cicero.* He was already obſerved to be extremely addicted to the Vice of *Gaming*, and in his Childhood, this Vice and an indiſcreet Vanity ſeemed to have the intire Poſſeſſion of him. The Delight which he took in Gaming and making Verſes imploy'd his whole Infancy, and were certain Prognoſticks that the Youth wou'd grow up into an eminent Poet and *Stockjobber*. * As he increas'd in Years a fortunate Bronze embelliſh'd his Features; and e're he was yet ſeventeen, gave evident Tokens that he wou'd never ſuffer in his worldly Affairs thro' an Exceſs of Modeſty. About this Time his Father and Mother both died, in Circumſtances not very conſiderable; and *Æſopus*, qualified with a very ſlender Education at a Country Grammar School, join'd himſelf to a Troop of *traveling Commedians* for Bread.

When we conſider this young Gentleman now adrift in the World, with a mean Educa-

* A *Stockjobber*, tho' this is a modern Phraſe, I take the Liberty to render it thus, my Author has it ἐν πράγματεια πολύστροφος.

tion, little Habits, and a bad Acquaintance, without Credit or Money, or viſible Merit of any Kind, nothing to ſubſiſt him, but what the bounteous Gods had beſtowed upon him in the Inflexibility of his Muſcles, waiting till Time and Accident ſhould open a Way for him to Wealth and Glory; we cannot help looking upon him as a ſurpriſing and an exalted Genius: And this he ſoon appeared to be; for he improv'd every Day, and became in very little Time a tolerable Buffoon, and had learnt to pleaſe, as the Company he was to flatter deſired to be pleaſed: He could be noiſy or ſilent, ſawcy or well-bred, obſcene or modeſt, the Joker or the Jeſt, the Pleaſure or Contempt of the Company, juſt as he found they required it.

He had not long travelled in the *Provinces*, but he grew weary of ſtrolling, and ambitiouſly attempted to gain a Settlement in *Rome* itſelf, and ſucceeded ſo well to get himſelf inrolled in the loweſt Claſs of thoſe Comedians who acted under the Direction of *Claudius Divitius*, at a low Salary of a few Aſſes a Week, about one Shilling of our Money a Night. Here he ſtood the Hiſs of the People many Years; he never attempted to open his Mouth, but an univerſal Averſion appear'd; the whole Audience conſtantly expreſs'd their Diſlike of him. He was indeed at that Time, both in his Manner and Form, quite diſagreeable: Here he, for a while, loſt the Name of *Æſopus*, and was called *Colleius*;

Colleius; and I have frequently ſeen his Name written thus, to ſome little Parts he then acted.

And now, ſince the People took only this ſevere Notice of him as an Actor, he determin'd (for he was undaunted with Relation to his own Parts and Abilities) to try how they wou'd receive him as an Author. In order to this, he rummaged over the old Plays of *Livius*, *Pacuvius*, and others, that had not been acted for ſome Time, and from thence he collected a few Scenes, tacked them together, and called them a Comedy. It had Succeſs; and very fortunately for him, as he acted a conſiderable Part in a Thing he call'd his own, the Town indulg'd him as an Actor on the Merit of his being a Writer. Yet this was not the only good Effect it had, it put Money in his Pocket, and, as it gave him ſome Reputation, rais'd him to the Converſation of the *Roman Gentlemen.* They look'd on him in a different Light from what they had ſeen him; and he who was never bore on or off the Stage before, became now to be tolerable when not upon it. But as we ſeldom know how to cultivate our own Genius, and are too apt frequently to miſtake our Abilities, ſometime after this Maſter *Colleius* undertook to exhibit a Tragedy under the Title of *Perollas* and *Iſadoras:* The Criticks, who have mention'd it ſay, (for there is not one Tittle of this Piece come down to us) that it was the ſtrangeſt and moſt unnatural Stuff that ever was written. Nobody underſtood

the

the Story; nobody ever heard of the Names of his Heroes; nobody from the Beginning to the End cou'd conceive what he meant. They cou'd perceive only that as he had made himſelf, what he thought, the fine Gentleman in his Comedy; in his tragic Gallymawfrey, he intended himſelf the Hero. Yet did he not ſtop here, but, as we have it by Tradition, immediately after this he undertook to draw the Character of *Xerxes*, and call'd this Thing a Tragedy too. It was exhibited with the ſame ill Fortune as the former, no Character maintain'd, the Diction and the Fable throughout unintelligible; it was ſaid to be a ſilly Tale collected from ſome dreaming Romance. Indeed this was ſo wretched an Attempt, that our young Profeſſor cou'd not prevail on his Brethren in the ſame Houſe where he was, to perform it, and therefore hired the Stage where *Roſcius* preſided, and pawn'd his Credit for Money to anſwer the Charges, if it ſhou'd not ſucceed, and be able to anſwer its own Expences on that Theatre. Such were the Overflowings of his Juvenile Imagination, the pardonable Exuberances of a wild and uncultivated Wit.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of his Humour, Stature, Converſation, Piety, &c.

HE was in Stature of the middle Size, his Complexion fair, inclinable to the Sandy, his Legs ſomewhat of the thickeſt, his Shape a little clumſy, not irregular, and his Voice rather ſhrill than loud or articulate, and crack'd extremely, when he endeavour'd to raiſe it. He was in his younger Days ſo lean, as to be known by the Name of *Hatchet Face*, *Emaciati Vultus*, ſays *Auſonius*. This brings to my Memory ſome Verſes written by our own *moſt ingenious Poet Laureat and Countryman* Colley Cibber, *Eſq*; in an Epilogue to a Comedy of his, call'd *the Wife's Reſentment*. I hope this worthy Gentleman will forgive me for quoting theſe Lines. I do it to ſhew my Readers the exact Similitude there ſeems to be between theſe two great Men. I don't commend the Verſes for the Poetry, but the Modeſty of them. In the Beginning of this Epilogue, he complains of thin Houſes, and lets the Audience know that the Ladies of the Stage are in no danger of ſtarving, they may live well enough on Pit, Gallery, &c.

But

But I (ſays he) *whoſe Beauty only is Grimace,*
Have no great Proſpect from my Hatchet Face,
All I can do muſt be
With humble Ale and Toaſt, round Seacoal-Fire,
At Night my penſive Spouſe and Brats t'inſpire
With Tags of Crambo Rhymes, and tack 'em to
the Italian *Lyre.*
Nay, ev'n when Hunger prompts 'em for Relief,
I'll make them ask for Food in Recitative;
As thus (ſings in Recitativo) *Mamma, well;--*
what is it you mutter?
Pray cut me a great Piece of Bread and Butter.

You ſee plainly by this, our illuſtrious Countryman is not unlike *Æſopus* in this Particular, only with this Difference, the Voice of *Æſopus* was hoarſe, without any Compaſs, cracked, and utterly incapable of Harmony, while that of our Laureat is mellow, melodious and *Silver-toned*, and capable of all the Harmony that Art or Nature can inſpire. And indeed as I am now tranſlating this Character of *Æſopus*, there ſeems to me in many of the virtuous Features of this Portrait a ſurpriſing Similitude between the *Roman Actor* and our illuſtrious Countryman.

As to the Piety of *Æſopus*, he was altogether unlike our Laureat; for the Manuſcript affirms he affected to have a great Contempt for Religion; he went ſo far as publickly to deny the Exiſtence of the Immortal Gods, and pretended to

to believe with the *Epicureans* that there were no Rewards or Puniſhments hereafter for the Merits or Demerits of a good or evil Life; at leaſt he comforted himſelf with this Thought, and as *Martial* ſays wittily,

Nullos eſſe Deos, inane Cælum
Affirmat Sellus, *probatque quod ſe*
Factum, dum negat hoc, videt beatum.

The Common People therefore always looked on him as an impious and ſacrilegious Perſon; and accordingly on this Account, in his private Life, when off the Stage, he became ſtill more odious; and it was generally believ'd, if there had been a *Plebiſcitum*, or Act of the People propoſed, that *Æſopus* ſhou'd have been executed *more majorum*, it wou'd have gone very hard with him. The Truth of this is, *Æſopus* miſtook the Caſe, and becauſe he had heard ſome Men of Learning and Wit railly and ridicule the ſuperſtitious Parts of Religion, as their *Auſpices*, *Sacrifices*, *Myſteries*, *the Mutatio Extorum*, which are, and have been in many Ages and Countries interwoven politically into the civil Parts of the Conſtitution; *Æſopus* imagined, if there was any Fraud in it, it muſt be all a Cheat, and deny'd therefore, what the wiſeſt and greateſt Philoſophers in all Ages have aſſerted, *an univerſal and eternal Mind, or firſt Cauſe.* A certain Author calls this Sort of half Free-Thinkers, with juſt Contempt,

Vacuum ſine Mente Popellum. Yet, notwithſtanding this Hatred which was born him by the common People, they were pleaſed to ſee him in his comic Characters, upon the Stage. It ſeems they deteſted the Man, but liked the Actor; nor did they judge amiſs; his public Appearance was agreeable, his private Manners were deteſtable.---And yet he frequently convers'd with Gentlemen of the firſt Rank and the politeſt Parts in *Rome.* There was ſomething odd and out o' the Way in his Behaviour; he had Humour and a kind of Wit, but not conducted by any Judgment or Reflection, nor ſeaſon'd with any Tincture of Letters. He affected to know much; and as it muſt often happen to thoſe who wou'd be thought knowing when they are ignorant, he frequently got out of his Depth, and expoſed himſelf to Ridicule and Contempt. But the Gentlemen, who condeſcended to be his Companions, were contented to be diverted with him as he cou'd divert them. They wou'd delight to hear him ſqueak in an *Eunuch*'s Treble, or mimick *Roſcius*, or rehearſe the little Hiſtories of his *Scenical Amours*, or invent new Oaths at Play; and ſometimes, they ſay, he would act a more friendly Part, and contract over a Bottle to accommodate a Man of Quality with a Theatrical * Beauty.

* In the MSS. παίδα κάλοντε ἐπαγγελλεται, there being none of the female Sex ſuffered to appear on any Stage, till the latter End of the laſt or the Beginning of this Century.

As

As I have ſaid, he had the Appearance of ſome Wit and Humour in Converſation; but his Wit was ever ſquab and unpolite, and his Humour of the loweſt Kind. For an Inſtance or two, *Septimius Pollio* ſaid to him one Evening in great Pleaſantry and Frankneſs, *My dear Æſop, I love thee better than any Thing in this World. Except a Shilling*, reply'd the Comedian. When *Lentulus*, that *Lentulus* who was afterwards in the Conſpiracy with *Cataline*, and who is deſcribed by *Salluſt* to be fond of the *Roman* Ladies of Pleaſure, ſaid to him in Raillery, *Colleie*, a Name he went by among his *Sympoſiaſts, I ſhall certainly live to ſee thee * pox'd and hanged.----Yes, my Lord, if I converſe with your Women, or deal in your Politicks*, reply'd *Æſopus*.

* ἑλκωδῆς τε καὶ σταυρωθείς, diſeas'd and crucify'd, ſays the MSS.

CHAP. III.

Of his Writings.

WE will begin with the moſt celebrated of his Dramatic Performances, a Comedy generally approv'd: (the *Tranſlator ſays, he has ſeen ſome Fragments of this Play tranſlated into* Italian, *under the Title of* * il' incurioſo Marito) and becauſe his other Works were impure and ungrammatical, and the Style in this Play was allowed to be in many Places raiſed, elegant and proper; it was ſaid he had been honoured with the Pens of ſome Perſons of Diſtinction, as if *Scipio* and *Lælius* had aſſiſted him, as well as *Terence*. This *Æſopus* never heartily denied, and ſometimes he wou'd ſeem rather to give into the Truth of theſe Reports, and confeſs the Honour he had received, and was often heard on this Occaſion to repeat theſe Lines of *Terence* in his Prologue to the *Adelphi*.

Nam quod iſti dicunt malevoli, Homines nobiles
Eum adjutare, aſſidueque unà ſcribere

* In MSS. Γαμέτης Αδελής

Quod

Quod illi Maledictum vehemens eſſe exiſtimant
Eam Laudem hic ducit maximam, cum illis placet,
Qui vobis univerſis & Populo placent.

But his *Criticks* produced other Arguments. They affirm'd, he cou'd not be the Author of this Piece, becauſe he had before this written and cauſed to be acted ſeveral Plays, without Genius, Style, Nature, Humour, or any the leaſt Reſemblance of this. *Æſopus* cou'd by no means bear theſe Reflections, as he was a very fond, and indulgent, we may ſay an overweening Parent to theſe Children, of his Brain I mean; for, as to his Works, whatever their Succeſs was at firſt, tho' damn'd, hiſſed, ſcouted and contemn'd by all who ſaw them, he conſtantly reviv'd them, brought them about again and again, and crowded 'em on the Stage in Oppoſition to the Suffrages of the whole People; ſo that for ſome Time, *Æſopus* having now the chief Hand in the Direction of the Stage, nothing was repreſented but *Æſopus* and his Works; and all other Poets were ſhut out, excepting only two or three Writers of Tragedy; for tho' our Heroe cou'd never ſucceed either as an Author or an Actor in the Buskin, yet he coveted it above all Things; he wou'd often provide himſelf with the whole *Apparatus* of the *Stage Heroe*; he ſhou'd ſtretch out, and

ſtrut

ſtrut and adorn himſelf with the *purple Robe*, the *Plume* and the *Truncheon*; but alas, all wou'd not do; he had a burleſque Contraction of his Muſcles in Diſtreſs, which turn'd every Word he utter'd into Ridicule, and the People were affected with a Paſſion quite the contrary to that which he attempted to excite. Thus he was, as I have hinted, extremely fond of performing in Tragedy, as Eunuchs, they ſay, are of the fair Sex, tho' it was not in his Power to write or to pronounce a Line.

What is yet more wonderful, he imagin'd he was an excellent Singer; and in a muſical Entertainment, at leaſt what he call'd ſo, and which *Peter Crinitus* has inform'd us from a Fragment of *Varro* was intituled Ἔρως Αἰνιγμάτικος *which the Tranſlator calls*, *Love's a Riddle*, or *Love in a Riddle*. In this Piece, it ſeems, he erected himſelf into a Sort of a ſelf-ſufficient paſtoral ſing-ſong Fop; he ſung; and at the Concluſion of every *Stanza*, the Audience ſerenaded him in a very diſcordant Chorus; he ſung again and again, and this Harmony between the People and the Actor continued thro' two whole Acts; never was there ſuch harmonious Diſcord. At length our Buskin'd *Shepherd*, the only Creature in the whole Houſe not yet tired with his Squawling, and the comfortable Concert of Fifty * *Catcalls*, petitioned in the

* Θεάτρικοις Αυλαῖς- -In MS.

moſt

moſt humble Manner that they would give him one Song more. However unreaſonable his Requeſt might be, they granted it, he ſung again with the ſame ill Succeſs. However, he cauſed this Offspring of his, (ſurely I was not in the Wrong to call him an overweening Parent) to mount the Stage again the next Day; and, as he conceived very politickly, made Intereſt for the *Conſul Elect* or *Chief Magiſtrate in poſſe*, to honour it with his Preſence, to appear in his Seat: But the *Roman* People looking on this as a kind of Inſult on their Liberty of judging, which they expected ſhou'd be free from any Awe, outraged every Actor, nor wou'd ſuffer one of them to go on; when *Æſopus* capitulated with them in theſe ſpecific Terms: *That if they would pleaſe to have ſo much Regard to the Preſence of the Magiſtrate then before 'em*, to permit him to hear it, he engaged the Piece ſhould never be preſented again. I have dwelt thus long on theſe two laſt Particulars, to ſhew how careful we ought to be, not to miſtake our Talents; for *Æſopus* was certainly an excellent comic Actor, and had written with Succeſs; but it is as certain, he cou'd not ſing nor write Verſes.

Æſopus had a particular Knack at ſtealing *Scenes*, mixing them up with ſomething new, and calling them his own, and has been often convicted of this Sort of Felony: I will give you but one Example, among many, of this Sort of *Dramatic Plagiariſm*, and in my Opinion

pinion it is an Inſtance of a moſt *intrepid Aſſurance*. There was at this Time a certain *Poeteſs* in *Rome*, called *Fulvia*, who had ſometimes ſucceeded in Characters of Humour on the Stage; ſhe offer'd a Play to the Peruſal of *Æſopus*; in this Play ſhe had drawn the Character of a very impudent Fellow, who in the ſame Play acted under his own Appearance two different Perſons, and perſuaded his Miſtreſs to believe him not to be himſelf in Oppoſition to her Senſes; this Character *Æſopus* ſcouted extremely. Why, Madam, ſaid he, this would be putting upon the Audience indeed; they will never bear it; 'tis extravagant, it is outraging Nature, it is ſilly, and it is not ridiculous. The poor Lady was beat out of her Deſign; but as our Corrector had the Play left ſometime in his Hand, he culled out this very Character, mix'd it with ſome other Felonies of the ſame Nature, which he had committed, and had it acted as his own the very next Year, and, as they tell us, play'd this very Part of *the Impudent Fellow* himſelf. *The Tranſlator begs leave to obſerve that our great Laureat has been accuſed by his Enemies, of ſome petty* Larcenies of this Sort. *Æſopus* was, ſays our M S. ſo very tenacious, that he never would alter or part with one Line, hardly with any Word he ever wrote, at the Interceſſion of any Superior, or any Friend he had in Life.---Here the Tranſlator begs leave to digreſs a little, to ſhew the Analogy there is between the Conſtitution and Manners of *Æſopus* and

our

our ingenious Countryman. We may remember there was a Play acted in *Drury Lane* ſome Years ago, called *Cæſar in Ægypt.* The *Poet*, who had a Mind to elevate and ſurprize, and all that, as Mr. *Bayes* ſays, had introduced four new Actors into the Scene, who were to take upon them the Form of *Swans*, to ſwim round the *Pharos*, and ſalute their Queen *Cleopatra* as ſhe ſailed down the River *Cydnos* in her royal Pleaſure-Barge; but whether the Birds were not ready in their Parts, or whether the Audience took his Swans for Geeſe, or to what other Accident it was owing, I don't remember, but this contributed ſomething towards the ill Succeſs of his Tragedy; for the great Quantity of metaphorical Fuſtian in it, of which he would not part with one Line, might have paſs'd amid the Glare and Tinſel of the Theatrical Ornaments.

This Gentleman grew at laſt ſo tenacious, that he refuſed once, tho' ſolicited at the ſpecial Inſtance of his Friends, to part with one ſingle Word; and this was in a Tragedy he took upon him to alter from *Shakeſpear*, called *the Life of King* John. The Line ſtood thus as alter'd by our Poet from *Shakeſpear.*

The LIFE *lies cold in buried* Arthur's *Veins.*

His Friends, with all Submiſſion to ſo great a Genius, inſiſted it ought to remain as he found it in the Original.

The BLOOD *lies cold in bury'd* Arthur's *Veins.*

But they contended in vain; he fought it out and defended it warmly and ſucceſsfully; he appeal'd more than once to a whole Aſſembly of Critics, Wits, Beaus and Politicians.---When one Day a Gentleman whom he particularly addreſs'd, ſaid with great Gravity, Mr. *C*———ſince you apply to me to ſolve this Affair, and deſire my Opinion, I am to tell you that---*Life lies cold*, borders upon, if it is not manifeſt Nonſenſe: Life, every one knows, is an active Principle, it is *Motion*, another Word for Heat, and therefore it ſeems to me abſurd to ſay *Life lies cold*; but we may with Propriety ſay, *the Blood lies cold*, becauſe when a Perſon is dead, Motion and Heat ceaſe, that active Principle which we call Life, ſtands ſtill; I think *Shakeſpear* is right; I think you are wrong.---Notwithſtanding all this, the Poet would not part with his Monoſyllable, for that was all they contended about; happily for him indeed this Play was not added to the reſt of his Offences againſt Common-Senſe, for it was never acted. But on other Occaſions this Gentleman was not quite ſo inflexible; for tho' in his *Cæſar in Ægypt* he made his Heroe ſo bad a Geographer, to order his Admiral to ſail directly for *Parthia*, he ſtrook it out on ſhewing him the Map. The other Place which he deign'd to alter, was a Deſcription of a Lion roaring dreadfully at the Foot of Mount *Ætna*,

Ætna, which he changed into a Wolf, having receiv'd good Information that there were no Lions in *Sicily*.

Æſopus, unlike this Gentleman, wou'd never part with any Beaſt he brought on the Stage, tho' never ſo improper or unnatural. Yet it appears from the Agreement of all the Manuſcripts, and their Commentators, that *Æſopus* was in his Nature timid and irreſolute, or inſolent and overbearing, as Diſtreſs or Succeſs call'd him to the Exertion of theſe Paſſions, ſo that he frequently incurred the Diſpleaſure of the People, by ſquab Expreſſions ſpoken directly to them out of his Part; and they write that once in the Jocundity of his Heart, after having exhibited a new Play with ſome little Applauſe, he cried out in the Epilogue, ſtanding on Tiptoe, with a *Sans prendre* Air.---*I will ſtand you all*, meaning, he defy'd the Criticks; but the Audience was offended, and he was generally accounted from that Time, a very aſſuming, or to uſe a courſer and more vulgar Phraſe,---*a very impudent Fellow.* He wou'd ſometimes preſume to coin Phraſes; but in this particular, he was unſucceſsful, for as nobody underſtood them, nobody could follow them. To give an Inſtance of this, he was fond of an Actreſs, a Favourite of all *Rome*, and cotemporary with him; when commending her extraordinary Performance in one of his Plays, he ſays (ἔχωδεν τὲ τὰ ἔχωδοντα) ſhe *outed* her *outings*, literally; or in the vulgar Tranſlation,

ſlation, *She out-did her uſual Out-doings:* This was laughed at a great while, and it was ſome Years before he cou'd prevail upon himſelf to give it up; but he did it at laſt, and in Form.

This puts me in Mind of a Story I have heard of our Laureat, ſomething to his Diſadvantage, for he was here more tenacious than *Æſopus*. In that moſt excellent Tragedy of his call'd *Ximene*, or, *The Heroic Daughter*, thoſe who read it, not readily underſtanding it, it was apprehended, there might be ſome Obſcurity in the Diction; but he permitted his Patrons and Friends to ſtare, to deſire him to explain, to alter his Expreſſion only in ſuch Manner to convey to them the Meaning of his Sentiments; their Intreaties, their Reaſons, their Prayers were in vain; he ſtood buff to every Syllable. After this they would have attacked a Lion that tagg'd one of the Acts; they told him that tho' it was a very ſilly Beaſt, it ſeemed to be brought on the Stage in *Terrorem*, and might frighten the Ladies; that it was horrible, noiſy and nonſenſical, that he roar'd and laſh'd his Sides, and foam'd to no Manner of Purpoſe; but our Laureat defended his Monſter, *totis Viribus:* And brought him on; he roar'd, and the Audience hiſs'd.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of Æſopus, *in the Character of Corrector, and of the Delight he took in Choaking of Singing-Birds.*

ÆSOPUS had now raiſed himſelf into an Office, which muſt neceſſarily make a Perſon of his Complexion to be both envied and hated. It created him Enemies, but this gratified his Pride; it cauſed him to be almoſt univerſally deteſted, but his Inſolence was ſuperior to, and ſupported him under the general *Odium*; and this was the Office of *Corrector or Superviſor* of ſuch new Dramatic Pieces, as were to be performed on that Stage where he preſided. This Office was formerly intruſted ſometimes with the *Ædiles*, at other Times with Gentlemen of Diſtinction and Parts well qualify'd for the Office, whoſe Duty it was to regulate and govern the public Diverſions; who, as they had the ſupreme Direction of the Stage, took care the People ſhou'd be entertain'd with nothing contrary to Decency or good Manners. However, *Æſopus* had broke thro' all Rules, and became Corrector General of the Theatre in *propriâ Perſonâ*. It is true, he had written ſeveral Plays, and ſome of them ſucceeded,

ſucceeded, rather thro' the vicious Taſte that he had cauſed to prevail among the People, than from any intrinſic Merit in the Pieces themſelves; which may appear from this, that none of them will bear the Day-light, or to be ſeen out of the Glare and Garniture of Candle-light and Spangles; none of them can be read with Decency in the Cloſet of any Woman of Virtue; none of them can ſtand the Judgment of any Man of Senſe or Learning. So that many People who had ſeen his Plays, and been diverted with the Action on the Stage, have, when they read and conſidered them, ſtood amazed, and been ſurpriſed to find themſelves thus deluded by the *Jeu de Theatre*.

However, thus qualify'd he undertook, and for many Years ſuſtained the Charge of *Corrector* or *Cenſor of the Stage*, ev'n down to the very Days, when *Tully* was Conſul, when *Roſcius* acted, and when *Terence* wrote.

If it ſhou'd be inquired how a Player came to be inveſted with this great and important Truſt, a Truſt which ſo highly concerned the Morals of the Public, a Duty which the *Greeks* always committed to the Care of their chief Magiſtrates, and for which the *Romans* long before this, had created a Magiſtrate on purpoſe; whoſe principal Duty it was to take care of the public Diverſions, and that nothing ſhould be exhibited offenſive to good Manners or Religion: I ſay, if it ſhould be asked, how a common *Comedian*, without any Morals, without Humanity,

nity, or any kind of Literature, came to be intruſted with this Office; we ſhall be obliged to impute it to the Corruption of the Manners of the Time. *Rome* was not now, what ſhe had been in her vigorous and middle State, when ſhe ſupported her Grandeur by a conſtant Adherence to the Poverty and Virtue of her Anceſtors; when all private Regards and Intereſts were given up to the public Welfare: When Glory was the only Paſſion, and that Glory was only placed in the Defence of Liberty. The *Romans* were now become luxurious and effeminate; this produced Corruption, and a general Neglect of the public Welfare; almoſt all Property was ingroſſed by private Hands, in the Poſſeſſion of a few low dirty Uſurers, who made a Prey of the *Commonwealth.* The public Offices were expoſed to Sale. Whether this of the Ædileſhip was purchaſed by *Æſopus* with ready Money, is not ſaid; but if he was, as perhaps he might be, inſtrumental in the *menus plaſires* of the Great, and was favour'd or conniv'd at in his Office on that Account, it is the ſame Thing: It is moſt certain theſe Things ought not to have been ſuffer'd, nor wou'd have been tolerated in a well regulated *Commonwealth.* But the Uſe this Perſon, every Way unequal to the Task he had undertaken, made of his Office, was very injurious to *Literature*, and unworthy the Dignity of a great People, who had long ſince imported the Laws and politer Arts of the *Grecian Commonwealths*; and

were

were illuſtrious for their Learning, as well as their Arms. No Gentleman of Education or Genius cou'd poſſibly ſubmit his Writings to the Cenſure and Correction of a Perſon who had none: And therefore we have not any Account of more than two or three Plays, during the whole Time of *Adminiſtrator Æſopus's Power*, that had Intereſt and Merit enough, for they muſt have both, to prevail upon the *State* to interpoſe with *Æſopus* that they might be acted. As to the poor friendleſs Poets of the Town, they were treated by the Corrector with great Contempt, and a certain *haut en bas* Air; they were ſeldom heard, and when admitted to an Audience, generally diſmiſs'd with Contempt, and ſometimes with ſcurril Mirth. Of this we are to give an Example. About this Time a Gentleman of great Wit and Learning, and known to be favour'd by *Tully*, *Varro* and *Terence*, brought *Æſopus* a new Tragedy. It was a *well known Fable* founded on the Hiſtory of *Herod* and *Mariamne:* When this Gentleman, tho' ſupported by his own Parts and Merit, and the Intereſt of the moſt learned and powerful Men in *Rome*, read his play to the Corrector, the ſawcy *Comedian*, with an inſolent Sneer between Contempt and Pity, accompany'd with an Air of arrogant Superiority,---ſaid, *Sir, will you take the Advice of a Friend.---Apply yourſelf to ſome honeſt and laborious Calling*; the BELLES LETTRES *and you will never agree*; *you have no manner of Genius for Poetry.* It is not ſaid what

what Correction the Gentleman gave him by Way of Reply; but it is written that this very Play, was afterwards acted at another Houſe with great Applauſe, and was confeſs'd to have great Merit. Here the Tranſlator begs leave to obſerve from ſome Fragments that he has ſeen, that ſeveral of the Sentiments in this Piece ſeem to be taken and inſerted in a modern *Tragedy*, called *Mariamne*, written by Mr. *Fenton*.

Æſopus, who, as my Readers muſt obſerve, had not too much of what we call Humanity in his Compoſition; took great Delight in thus rebuffing the Poets, thoſe I mean who wrote for the Stage. He uſed to call this Paſtime of his, *Choaking of Singing-Birds:* And yet, what is more ſurpriſing, during the Tyrrany of this very *Æſopus*, the *Roman* Knight *Cenſorinus Chalibienſis* was *Ædile*, a learned, polite, and witty Man. Whether he permitted this, thro' his natural Indolence, or a Deſire he had of avoiding the Execution of an Office, wherein he was ſenſible he muſt ſometimes be obliged to give an ungrateful Negative (for he was a Gentleman of exceeding Humanity and Benevolence) we know not; theſe perhaps might be ſome of his Reaſons; but we may certainly add another; which was, his great Diffidence of himſelf; and this appears in nothing more plainly, than that he permitted this very *Æſopus*, of whoſe Abilities as a Writer, he hath often expreſs'd a very mean Opinion, to alter, to add, and to correct a Play of his own, written, as they tell us, on a Plan ſomething

like that of the *Andria* of *Terence*. The Corrector, after he had alter'd, and hack'd, and very much maimed it, at laſt ſuffer'd the *Ædile*'s own Play to be acted in the *Ædile*'s own Theatre; but there appear'd in it many *Colleian Strokes*, that is, Starts of the *ſublime unintelligible*, which no one could hit ſo well as *Æſopus*. The Knight's Friends blamed him, and ask'd him why he permitted it? He anſwered, *Gentlemen, I cannot help it; the Corrector will do as he pleaſes.*---By Methods like theſe, this *King of Dramatic Rome*, brought the People, who cou'd ſee noting but Plays, of which he either was the immediate Author, or the Corrector and the principal Actor, to fancy that Fuſtian, Bombaſt and Obſcurity was the proper Stage Language, and the Characters ſo outraged as to have very little of Nature, to be quite right on the Stage; their Taſte was adulterated, and they were in the Condition of thoſe, who have been long inured to drink the Compoſitions of a Wine-Brewer, quite ignorant of the natural Taſte of the Grape: For this Reaſon the *Phædra* of *Euripides*, and two or three other Plays of the *Greek* Tragedians, which got by great Intereſt to be repreſented, did not ſucceed when tranſlated into *Latin*. In a Word, this *eximious Undertaker* Æſopus, found means to ingroſs the whole Power of the Drama in *Rome*, at a Time too when *Virgil*, *Varro*, *Horace*, *Cenſorinus*, and others, whoſe Works will be immortal, flouriſhed there. We have, it is true, one

one *Tragedy* ſaid to be written by *Varro* himſelf in Defence of *Liberty*. This Piece came down to *Æſopus* by Command, ſo that here he had no Power to correct or amend; he only inſiſted to play a conſiderable Part in it, tho', as we have ſaid, he was a moſt execrable Performer as well as a Writer in Tragedy, and ſo he did all that was in his Power to murther it. From this Play, the late learned and ingenious Mr. *Addiſon* has taken many of the moſt glorious Sentiments, in Favour of Liberty and Virtue, in his Tragedy of *Cato*.

CHAP. VI.

Of his Gaming and Luxury.

ÆSOPUS was ſo great a Lover of Gaming, that, for ſome Part of his Life, all his other Paſſions ſeemed to be ſwallowed up or loſt in that: All his Hours, all that could poſſibly be ſpared from the abſolute Neceſſities of Nature and Buſineſs, were conſumed, as well as his Gold, in this intemperate Diverſion. *Varro* (ſays *Petrus Crinitus*) has ſeen him at a public Gaming-Table near the *Capitol*, in ſix Hours, throw away more than ten *Attic* Talents, or *one Thouſand Pounds Sterling*, very near the whole Sum he was Maſter of at that Time, to ſupport a large and increaſing Family; and yet after all this, ſo truly

philoſophical and ſerene was the valuable Temper of our *Roman*, ſo ſoon as the Warmth of his Blood during the very Action of Play had a little cooled, and the Fermentation ſubſided, he has been ſeen to retire to a public Houſe in the * *Forum*, and ſup on a little Pie fill'd with Mutton, which coſt but *two Aſſes* or thereabouts, being two Pence of our Money; and to quench his Thirſt with a ſmall Quantity of Barley boiled in Water: After this temperate Meal, the ſame *Author* declares, he has known him ſit down with great Chearfulneſs, and divert himſelf at a Game call'd, *Latrunculorum Luſus*, ſomething like our Back-Gammon, for about the Value of half an Ounce of Silver; and when the Day has been thus happily finiſhed, he has quietly retired, thrown himſelf on his Couch, and ſlept peaceably and ſoundly, as if nothing of this had happen'd.

Heroic Actions, like theſe, ought not to be buried in *Oblivion*; they merit the Pen of an immortal Epic Poet, rather than that of a poor mortal Memorialiſt like me.---How glorious! How magnanimous! How exalted a Spirit muſt an Heroe, capable of an Enterpriſe like this, be endued with; careleſs of his own Honour and Welfare, of his Subſiſtence, his Credit, his Fame; regardleſs of the calls of Nature, unconcern'd for the Support and Comfort of his Family, deſpiſing the little malevolent Tittle Tattle of the Vulgar, he ruſhed at once into a Dan-

* In Foro Communi, ſays *Heinſius*.

ger

ger infinitely ſuperior to that of mounting a Breach, or fighting in a Saw-pit.---He is unſucceſsful, he retires with his Wounds, he recovers the Tranquillity of his Soul, and ſits over his Mutton and his Barley-Water, infinitely above the little Aſſaults of Fortune.---And now perhaps he meditates alone and pennyleſs, in this his Exile from the Gaming-Board, like *Coriolanus*, Revenge and Conqueſt once again from foreign Auxiliaries.

However, his Friends, in conſideration to himſelf and his Family, not quite convinced of the Heroiſm of this Paſſion, endeavour'd to check it, which their Advice had often in vain attempted, by binding him under a penal Contract not to play, particularly at the *Latrunculi*, or Back-gammon; and he has been known when thus tied up, as they call it, from this, to invent a new Game on the Tables, to elude his Contract, at which he frequently loſt, to ſome low Company, large Sums; ſo ingenious was he in contriving his own Ruin, no Contract cou'd ever bind him; and, as *Roſcius* uſed to tell him, there was but one Way of *tying him up.* The Game he invented, he named the *Bearings.*

There is very little more ſaid of *Æſopus* in our MSS. As to his Luxury in eating and drinking, ſays our Author, it was moderate enough; it is known only that he was particularly fond of *a broil'd Blade-Bone*, the Delicacy of which he mentioned in one of his Comedies; and therefore I am a good deal ſurpriz'd, at what our learned and ingenious Countryman Doctor *Arbuthnot*

buthnot ſays, in his Tables of antient Coins, *&c.* in his Chapter of the *Roman* Expences in eating; he tells us, p. 133. * That *Claudius Æſopus* the *Tragedian*, gave an Entertainment in which there was one Diſh fill'd, among other Dainties, with *Singing-Birds* of great Price; that coſt ſix Hundred Seſterces, or four Thouſand eight Hundred forty three Pounds of our Money; and that the *young Captain* his Son treated his Gueſts, with coſtly Pearls, a Pearl for every Gueſt, made into Pearl Cordial. This ſame *Æſopus*'s Gains, ſays our Author, as a Tragedian, were yearly five Hundred *Seſterces*, or four Thouſand thirty ſix Pounds of our Money; and much more they ought to have been if he entertain'd in this extravagant Manner, and expended more than a whole Year's Income on a ſingle Diſh. But my Manuſcript reclaims againſt *Pliny*, *Gronovius*, *Hottoman*, *Budæus*, &c. and takes Notice only that our *Æſopus* in one Day loſt απο τὴ πεττέια, by the Dye δένα ταλέντα, which πεττέια by the Error of Tranſcribers may have been written πάτινα, and ſo produced the whole Miſtake of Eating for Gaming. But it requires the Aid of much abler Criticks, than I pretend to be, to clear up this Matter.

* *Plin. lib.* 10. *Cap.* 60. Maxime tamen inſignis eſt in hac Memoria Claudii Æſopi tragici Hiſtrionis Patina Sexcentis Seſtertiis taxata. Iterum Liber 35. Chap. 12. Cum unam Patinam Æſopi Tragædiarum Hiſtrionis in Natura Avium diceremus, Sexcentis Seſtertiis ſtetiſſe, non dubito indignatos legentes.

FINIS.